Hexametrical Genres from Homer to Theocritus

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for Bruce Lincoln and Jamie Redfield,
dear friends and fellow travelers

Preface and Acknowledgments

This study arises from my ongoing interest in the hexametrical poetry of the archaic and Hellenistic periods, as well as in ancient Greek religion and magic, and from my firm belief that much profit arises when all three are studied together. Of the four short genres of hexametrical poetry that I most closely interrogate, I began to work on incantations at least twenty-five years ago, when I published a series of loosely connected articles,[1] in which I unwittingly laid the foundation for Chapter 5 of this volume, work that I returned to with renewed vigor when Dirk Obbink and I published our book on the Getty Hexameters in 2013.[2] Chapter 3 on hymns also evolved slowly over a number of years, first in a graduate seminar on ancient Greek hymns that I teach regularly at the University of Chicago and then in articles on the paean and the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*.[3] The four internal chapters themselves initially took shape as lectures. The main argument for Chapter 3 (Hymn) was presented at the University of Lausanne (September 2010); the University of Missouri at Columbia (March 2011); at a meeting of the "Orality and Literacy" group at University of Michigan (June 2012); and at Cambridge University (May 2014). In the last two venues I owe special thanks to Ruth Scodel and Richard Hunter for their vigorous and friendly skepticism, which helped me simplify and hone my arguments.

Especially helpful, too, were the comments of my former colleague Boris Maslov at a conference entitled "Historical Poetics: Past, Present and Future" held at the University of Chicago in May 2011 and those that I received in February 2016, when Richard Martin kindly invited me to give a workshop at Stanford University on a draft of Chapter 6 (Lament). The central arguments in Chapter 4 (Oracle) were presented in 2018 at the Australian National University in Canberra and in 2019 at the University of Southern California, and I am grateful for the comments of Elizabeth Minchin at the

[1] Faraone (1992a, 1995, 1996, 2001a–c, 2004a–b, 2006b–c, 2011b, and 2013b–c).
[2] Faraone and Obbink (2013).
[3] Faraone (2011a, 2015, and 2018a)

former venue and Greg Thalmann at the latter. Special thanks go, finally, to Cléo Carastro for arranging a series of lectures in Paris in December 2017, at which I presented Chapters 4–6 in sequence for the first time and in the process profited from the comments of Cléo herself, Renaud Gagné, and John Scheid, the last of whom made me aware of some crucial evidence about early Sibylline oracles.

The manuscript itself has also profited from the comments of many. I thank Seth Schein for his comments on and critique of an early version of Chapter 3, especially his advice on how to change the sequence of the argument, and I owe a debt of gratitude to Margalit Finkelberg, Boris Maslov, Radcliffe Edmonds, and Marco Fantuzzi, who read through and commented on different parts of the manuscript, and special thanks to Janet Downie, who gave me crucially important advice about the shape and content of the Introduction and Chapter 2. And I will always be grateful to Julia Kindt and the staff at the Centre for Classical and Near Eastern Studies of Australia, University of Sydney for making the month of February 2018 an exceptionally productive one, ending, as it did, with the first fully annotated typescript of the book. I am also grateful to Hannah Dubinski and Anna Darden, who did a stellar job assembling the indices and to Karen Donohue for her careful copy-editing. Early versions of some of the arguments in this volume were published in *Greece & Rome* (part of Section 3.4), the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (Sections 5.1–2 and 5.5), *Antichthon* (Section 5.2 and Appendix C), *Classical Quarterly* (Section 5.4), the *American Journal of Philology* (Section 2.2) and *Transactions of the American Philological Association* (Appendix E); in each case, I have profited much from the comments of various editors and anonymous referees, as I have from the anonymous readers of this volume. I should also add that the production of this book was delayed for at least a year by circumstances beyond the author's control.

I am, as always, deeply thankful for institutional help. My initial research was supported by generous grants from the Loeb Classical Foundation Grant (2009) and NEH Fellowship for University Professors (2013–14). And at the University of Chicago I am grateful to two successive deans, Martha Roth and Anne Robertson, and to two chairs of the Classics Department—Alain Bresson and Cliff Ando—for their continued support for serious research at the University of Chicago in the form of research leave and funding, and, as always, to Catherine Mardikes, our wizard bibliographer in the Regenstein Library. The book is dedicated fondly to Jamie Redfield and Bruce Lincoln

in deep gratitude for all of the fun we have had over the last thirty years of team-teaching and especially for all of the things I have learned from them in the seminar room and in our energetic conversations around various dining-room tables.

Athens, April 2019

Abbreviations

CEG	P.A. Hanson, *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca* (Berlin 1982–89)
DT	A. Audollent, *Defixionum Tabellae* (Paris 1904)
DTA	R. Wünsch, *Defixionum Tabellae Atticae*, *IG* 3.3 (Berlin 1897)
FGrH	F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Berlin/ Leiden 1923–58)
GMA	R. Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets.* Vol. 1: *Papyrologica Coloniensia* 22.1 (Opladen 1994)
Heim	R. Heim, *Incantamenta Magica Graeca-Latina*, Jahrbücher für classische Philologie Suppl. 10 (Leipzig 1892)
IGH	T. Preger, *Inscriptiones Graecae metricae* (Lipsiae 1891)
K-A	R. Kassel and C. Austin, *Poetae comici Graeci* (Berlin 1983–)
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zurich 1981–)
L-P	E. Lobel and D.L. Page, *Poetarum Lesbiorum fragmenta* (Oxford 1955)
LSJ	Liddell, Scott, and Jones et al. (eds.) *A Greek-English Lexicon*[9] with revised Supplement (Oxford 1996)
PGM	K. Preisendanz [and A. Henrichs], *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die Griechischen Zauberpapyri*[2] 2 vols. (Stuttgart 1973–1974)
PMG	D.L. Page, *Poetae melici Graecae* (Oxford 1962)
P&W	Parke and Wormell (1956)
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (Leiden 1923–)
SGD	D. Jordan, "A Survey of Greek Defixiones Not Included in the Special Corpora" *GRBS* 26 (1985) 151–197
SM	R. Daniel and F. Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum*, 2 vols., *Papyrologica Coloniensia* 16.1 and 2 (Opladen 1990 and 1991)
SMA	C. Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian*, University of Michigan Studies, Humanistic Series 4 (Ann Arbor 1950)
Supp. Hell.	H. Lloyd-Jones and P. Parsons, *Supplementum Hellenisticum* (Berlin 1983)

1
Introduction

In the late fifth century Aristophanes has his character Aeschylus express a strongly utilitarian view of early hexametrical poetry:[1]

> σκέψαι γὰρ ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς
> ὡς ὠφέλιμοι τῶν ποιητῶν οἱ γενναῖοι γεγένηνται.
> Ὀρφεὺς μὲν γὰρ τελετάς θ᾽ ἡμῖν κατέδειξε φόνων τ᾽ ἀπέχεσθαι,
> Μουσαῖος δ᾽ ἐξακέσεις τε νόσων καὶ χρησμούς, Ἡσίοδος δὲ
> γῆς ἐργασίας, καρπῶν ὥρας, ἀρότους· ὁ δὲ θεῖος Ὅμηρος
> ἀπὸ τοῦ τιμὴν καὶ κλέος ἔσχεν πλὴν τοῦδ᾽, ὅτι χρήστ᾽ ἐδίδαξεν,
> τάξεις, ἀρετάς, ὁπλίσεις ἀνδρῶν;
>
> For consider from the start
> how useful (*ôphelimoi*) the noble poets have been:
> Orpheus, for one, taught us rituals and to refrain from homicide,
> Musaeus, cures for diseases and oracles, and Hesiod,
> works of tillage, seasons of harvest and plowing. And the divine Homer,
> whence did he obtain honor and glory, if not from this, that he
> taught us useful things (*chrêsta*): tactics, brave deeds,
> and the weapons of men?

This passage was central to Havelock's famous argument that archaic poems in dactylic hexameters served as a kind of tribal encyclopedia that preserved all sorts of useful information, for example, when to plow a field or how to sacrifice a cow.[2] Both Aristophanes and Havelock were, of course, primarily concerned with the content of these various poems, an approach that minimizes the differences between them in terms of poetic style, performative context, and implied audiences.

Although the passage suggests that these "useful" poets of old were all individuals, who specialized in one or perhaps two genres, most scholars

[1] *Frogs* 1030–36. The sequence (Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod, Homer) seems to have been the common way to list early poets, at least in the classical period—see, e.g., Hippias DK 86 b6 and Plato *Apology* 41a—and it is probably based on some vague perception of their relative chronology; see Konig (2010) 52–55.

[2] Havelock (1963) 66 and (1982) 122–24. Given the focus elsewhere in the *Frogs* on the moral or political utility of poetry, Hunter (2014) 86–87 suggests that the "useful things" listed here are not, in fact, bits of factual information, but the moral attitudes that lie behind them. I agree that, given how the character Aeschylus elsewhere in the play focuses on the moral import of poetry, we might have expected him to stress this point, but it is hard to see a moralizing definition of "useful things" in the passage itself.

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would nowadays agree that, like "Homer," each of the names mentioned by the comic poet stands for a performance tradition, in which many individual poets participated over time.[3] The name "Orpheus," in short, like those of "Homer" or "Hesiod," was a convenient persona under which later poets could compose—Pythagoras, for example, was alleged to have composed several different poems under Orpheus' name.[4] The poets who performed in these traditions, moreover, often excelled in several genres. Thus, in addition to the rituals and prohibitions that Aristophanes mentions, the Orphic repertoire also apparently included theogonies, hymns, and probably even heroic narratives.[5] The name Musaeus, moreover, literally "belonging to the Muse," likewise seems to have been a shared moniker for a series of hexametrical performers, who were perhaps most famous for their oracles, which were collected during the tyranny of Hipparchus and still known to Plato and Sophocles.[6] Presumably they were bundled together in a single continuous collection, not unlike the latter half of the Hesiodic *Works and Days*.[7] Similar collections of hexametrical oracles were also attributed to poets with more regional reputations: on the Greek mainland a series of male performers, who went by the name of "Bakis,"[8] and a group of women, called "Sibyls," who first appear on the Anatolian coast in the same area where the Homeric poems were composed.[9] On Crete, Epimenides, like Musaeus, was remembered as a poet and "root-cutter" with special knowledge of purificatory

[3] For the most recent summary, see Gainsford (2015) vi–x.

[4] See, e.g., Henrichs (2003) 212–16 and Riedweg (2002b) 52–53.

[5] West (1983) 1–38.

[6] Herodotus 7.6, for example, says that in the time of Pisistratus, Onomacritus was caught red-handed inserting one of his own oracles into the collection of Musaeus' poems; see Shapiro (1990) 335–36 and Dillery (2005) 167–68. More recently, scholars have wondered whether this report was biased by Pisisitratid propaganda, and Martinez (2011) has suggested that Onomacritus was in fact one of the first editors of the collection. Pausanias 1.22.7, writing much later, says that all of Musaeus' oracles were composed by Onomacritus and that the only genuine work of Musaeus was a hymn to Demeter written for the Lycomidae. Slings (2000) 72–73, on the other hand, is probably closer to the truth in thinking that in the sixth century, Onomacritus was still part of a living oral tradition of poets composing and reperforming oracles and that the alleged interpellation of Onomacritus was simply a performance in which Onomacritus performed an oracle that he alleged to be that of Musaeus.

[7] West (1983) 40.

[8] Dillery (2005) 179–80 notes that Herodotus quotes the oracles of Bakis more frequently than those of others and seems to have thought that his oracles were more reliable than others, and Henrichs (2003) 216–22, who notes that these oracles are often recited in ritual contexts, such as animal sacrifice.

[9] Bremmer (2010) 13–14 and Dillery (2005). And there must have been many others—Herodotus, for example, was a great believer in oracles and he insisted that the oracles of Bakis, Musaeus, and the otherwise unknown Lysistratos all correctly predicted the Greek victory at Salamis; see Shapiro (1990) 344.

and protective herbs,[10] who in Solon's time allegedly purified Athens of the Alcmeonid curse.[11] His hexametrical poetry included a *Theogony* and a collection entitled *Oracles*.[12] Wide discrepancies over the dates of his birth and death suggest that "Epimenides," too, was a name that could be adopted by various performers over a long stretch of time.[13]

Although poets performed numerous types of hexametrical poetry in the archaic period, scholars have, in fact, struggled to explain or define the connection between the dactylic hexameter and the notion of poetic genre, which in the ancient Greek world was dictated by meter, but also by the often ritual context in which a poem was performed.[14] This struggle has often been exacerbated by the notorious ambiguity of the Greek word *epos*, which can refer to both the "dactylic hexameter" and its most famous genre, "epic poetry," and also by the confusion in our sources over whether hexameters were sung with the melodic accompaniment of a stringed instrument, chanted with rhythmical accompaniment, or simply spoken aloud. In an effort to define an overarching genre of hexametrical poetry (*epos*) that embraces all the different kinds of content catalogued by Aristophanes, scholars have, in fact, generally settled upon a capacious notion of "epic" that can include hexametrical narratives about the *kleos* of mortals, like the *Iliad* or the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, as well as those primarily concerned with the gods, such as we find in the Homeric hymns and in the Hesiodic and Orphic theogonies.[15] This taxonomy certainly suffices for most of the surviving hexametrical poetry of the archaic period, which in large part shares the familiar "epic" balance between narrative and dialogue. But it gives us less guidance, for example, about the genre of the Hesiodic *Works and Days*, which Aristophanes describes above as "works of tillage, seasons of harvest and plowing," or the genres of the lost hexametrical poems that he describes

[10] Diogenes Laertius 1.112 calls him a "root-cutter" and a type of squill was named after him; Scarborough (1991) 147.

[11] They may have been the same poem, a theogony presented as a series of prophetic announcements, about which Aristotle enigmatically remarked that Epimenides "did not prophesy about the future, but about the hidden past." See West (1983) 45–47; for the oracles see Shapiro (1990) 339–40 and Dillery (2005) 181–83. For the *Theogony*, see Bernabé (2002).

[12] Aristotle *Rhet*. 1418a24; for the oracular poem more generally, see West (1983) 47–53, who thinks it may have been composed pseudepigraphically in fifth-century Athens.

[13] Plutarch and Diogenes Laertius place him in Athens in the time of Solon, but Plato says his visit took place just before the Persian Wars; see Shapiro (1990) 340.

[14] For discussion, see, e.g., Harvey (1955) and the essays collected in Depew and Obbink (2000).

[15] Thalmann (1984) xxi–xv, for example, makes an early attempt to separate "early hexametrical poetry" from "epic poetry," but he limits his definition to the Homeric and Hesiodic corpora; the recent survey by Gainsford (2015) i and 1 helpfully adds the Orphic corpus, as well as oracles and "about 200 inscriptions."

as the "rituals" of Orpheus or the "cures for diseases and oracles" of Musaeus, plural designations that seem to refer to collections of shorter recipes or prophecies.

In this study I shall not attempt to answer all of these long-standing questions, but rather I shall focus on the evidence for shorter, non-epic hexametrical genres as a way of gaining, albeit from the periphery, some new insights into the variety of their often ritual performance and their early history, and how poets from Homer to Theocritus embedded or imitated these genres to enrich their own poems, by playing with and sometimes overturning the generic expectations of their audiences or readers. I shall, therefore, aim primarily at the recovery of a number of lost or underappreciated hexametrical genres, which are usually left out of our modern taxonomies of archaic hexametrical poetry, either because they survive only in fragments or because the earliest evidence for them dates to the classical period and beyond. Of central importance will be the surviving hexametrical poets, especially those of archaic and Hellenistic date, who embed or imitate traditional hexametrical genres of shorter duration to give a recognizable internal structure to a shorter poem or to an episode or speech within a longer one. I begin in Chapter 2 with a series of "soundings," in which I examine three cases, where we have limited evidence for the existence of independent genres: (i) how Homeric poets embed the generic forms of epitaphs and avuncular advice; (ii) how a mimetic poem composed by Theocritus helps us to imagine the performance context of Sappho's hexametrical *epithalamia*; and (iii) how the short poems embedded in the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer* reflect the rich array of short hexametrical performances. I devote the main body of the volume, however, to describing the form and to some degree the history of four hexametrical genres, for which we do have substantial evidence that anchors them firmly in a ritual context and in the archaic period: the epichoric cult hymn performed in a sanctuary in connection with a sacrifice or procession (Chapter 3); the oracle chanted at a sanctuary of Apollo or by an itinerant Sibyl (Chapter 4); the incantation used to cure a disease or curse a rival (Chapter 5); and the solo laments sung in succession by women at the funeral of a family member or at the annual festival of Adonis (Chapter 6). And although each chapter is rhetorically framed around a Homeric episode or speech, for example, the Chryses episode in *Iliad* 1 or Circe's instructions to Odysseus in *Odyssey* 10, each will also adduce evidence from a number of other sources, especially the hexametrical fragments of the archaic and classical periods, ritual inscriptions, and the mimetic

poems of Hellenistic period, all of which preserve important details about where, when, and how these shorter hexametrical genres were performed and by whom.

1.1 Embedded Genres in Homeric Narratives

But what do I mean when I say that an archaic hexametrical poet "embeds" a short genre in a longer narrative poem? In the case of the Homeric poems, I take my cue from the famous observation of Bakhtin, who suggested that in the early-modern period, novelists easily incorporated other, shorter genres, both the artistic (e.g., short stories, songs, dramatic texts) and the mundane (e.g., epistles or legal transcripts) and that they did so, in part, because they knew that their reader's expectations of these shorter prose genres could be utilized, distorted, and even overturned, as the plot of their novels dictated.[16] Bakhtin included both poetry and prose in his list of these "incorporated genres," but for the novel they are, in fact, largely prosaic, which makes sense, of course, because it is presumably much easier for novelists to embed short prose genres, like an epistle or a newspaper obituary, into their own prose narratives. I shall argue that in similar fashion the Homeric poets absorbed a number of shorter genres into their poems and that they could do so most easily with those composed in dactylic hexameters. Such an approach is not entirely new, but it has not been fully utilized.[17] Martin, for example, aptly sums up this Homeric habit of embedding other genres by pointing out that

[16] See Bakhtin (1981) 263 for "inserted genres" and 320–21 for the "incorporated genre" and (1986) 62 for shorter genres that are "absorbed and digested" by the novel. See Frow (2006) for the impact of Bakhtin's ideas more generally and, for their impact on Homeric studies, see Martin (1997), who suggests that Homeric similes were "generic imports" that were subordinated to the "ambitious super-genre of epic," an idea that Tsagalis (2004) 24–25 applies to lament. Martin (2005) 172 rightly suggests, moreover, that these sub-genres were numerous: "the genius of Homeric composers is to vacuum up the sub-genres that naturally occur on their own in the oral poetic surroundings, and put them to new and pointed use." He stresses a similar feature in Hesiodic poetry ([1992] 21–23): "The most important poetic strategy for constructing an open-ended advice composition as the *Works and Days* is the inclusion of a number of other genres," and (p. 24), "the smaller song-genres which the *Works and Days* absorbed in order to fulfill its larger purpose as instructional (rather than ritual) verse." For some illustrative examples of how "a text in one genre incorporates a text in another," see Frow (2006) 40–48, who discusses the use of the riddle in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (pp. 40–41) or the embedded epistle of Fanny Price in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (pp. 46–48).

[17] For a similar approach, see Tsagalis (2004) 24 on the laments in the *Iliad*: "as a monumental composition, the *Iliad* has absorbed different poetic genres from a long-standing oral tradition . . . [which] include praise poetry, blame poetry and, most pertinently for this study, funerary poetry" and (pp. 24–25) "laments as a subgenre of funerary poetry were subordinated to the ambitious super-genre of epic." But he does not go on to argue, as I shall below in Chapter 6, that the embedded genre was originally composed in dactylic hexameters.

the Homeric epics "attained their bulk by the introduction of pre-existing or contemporary non-epic genres" and that it is "a mode of composition that gives both Homeric poems their convincing realistic tone."[18] In the past, however, scholars have generally described these embedded genres as linguistic phenomena that could be expressed in ordinary speech, as well as in a number of different literary genres, both poetic and prosaic, suggesting that "speech-act types" or "speech formats" lie, for example, behind the laments in the *Iliad* or the instructions of Circe in the *Odyssey*.[19] In this regard, Martin's work has been exemplary, because he has shown, for example, the enormous role that commands play in the *Iliad*, where in most cases the poet has undoubtedly rendered a prose speech-type in dactylic hexameters.[20] Martin has also suggested that there existed another, more complicated speech genre of instruction that we find in the *Odyssey*, in which a native informant (e.g., Nausicaa) tells a stranger (e.g., the shipwrecked Odysseus) how to get to some unfamiliar place (this is the "map") and what customs to follow, once he arrives (this is the "script").[21] In the case of military commands, of course, it is unlikely that generals ever gave orders to their troops in dactylic hexameters, but as we shall see in Chapter 3, at least one sub-genre of the "map and script" type was regularly composed in dactylic hexameters: the instructional oracle. In the case of lament we can also rely on the substantial body of scholarship on lament as a speech genre, beginning with Alexiou and ending with Tsagalis, who have shown how knowledge of this very old and continuous Greek tradition can inform our reading of the *Iliad*, especially at the end of the poem, where the keening Trojan women present a critical female counterpoint to the heroic ideology of the poem.[22] But here, too, I shall

[18] Martin (1984) 31, speaking more broadly about all "primary" genres (i.e., both verse and prose) and specifically about character speech.

[19] See, e.g., Derderian (2001) 10, for "Homeric speech genres" in the context of the laments in the *Iliad* or Martin (2007) and Sections 4.1–2 below for the "map-and-script" type of "speech type-scene" found in the "Orphic" gold tablets-and in the character speeches of the *Odyssey*. Bakker (1997) 1–17 and Murnaghan (1999) 203–4 also discuss Homer as a source for "speech genres" and "discourse strategies." Minchin (2007) makes good use of Bakhtin as well, but prefers the term "speech format"; acknowledging (pp. 23–26) its affinity to other critical terms, such as "speech-act type," "speech act," or "speech type."

[20] Martin (1989).

[21] For Circe's advice, see Martin (2007) 4–5, who describes "speech type-scenes" as "flexible, but recurrent modes of handling a situation" that "occur in character-voice instead of narrator-voice" and are built on syntactical and pragmatic linguistic frameworks, rather than the content that usually defines other kinds of Homeric type-scenes. See also Minchin (2007) 23–70, who discusses rebukes and declined invitations.

[22] See, e.g., Alexiou (2002), a second edition of her classic 1974 study, and Tsagalis (2004) 15 n. 66, who in a discussion of lament as a rather capacious speech type writes, "the *Iliad* has both 'absorbed' and adapted the sub-genre of the γόοι to his subject matter." Elsewhere, he suggests (pp. 20–21) that "in certain cases, the Iliadic text hints at what might have preceded certain

suggest that although there might have been a general "speech-act" category of Greek lament capacious enough to embrace the lyric traditions reflected in the choruses of Attic tragedy, the female laments in the *Iliad* share a number of linguistic hallmarks that are tied to the structure of the dactylic hexameter and thus reflect an independent hexametrical sub-genre of lament that was performed both at family funerals and probably at the annual celebrations of the Adonia, at which women mourned the death of Aphrodite's consort, Adonis.[23]

There are, moreover, at least two different ways in which the Homeric poets embed a short hexametrical genre. The easiest method is to simply import a freestanding hexametrical speech genre as part of the speech of a Homeric character, a relatively simple maneuver, since speeches occupy roughly half of the length of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.[24] And indeed, we shall see that two of our four case studies will begin with the speeches of individual characters—Circe's instructions in the *Odyssey* and the solo laments in the *Iliad*. In each case, I shall argue that the poet has imported a freestanding hexametrical genre that is well known to his audience and that he can use to enhance a dramatic or narrative situation by fulfilling or upsetting the audience's generic expectations in various ways. In Chapters 3 and 5, on the other hand, I argue that the poet has taken two other hexametrical genres—hymn and incantation—and used them, not in his character speeches, but rather in the narrative portions of his poem. In Chapter 3, I argue that the *Iliad* poet has modeled most of the Chryses episode in Book 1 on a local hexametrical hymn to Apollo Smintheus, in order to play with expectations about the various stock characters, who appear in a traditional type of epichoric or cult hymn in which human impiety is always punished by the gods. In this case the generic appropriation is quite easy, because the poet has, without changing the hexametrical meter, embedded both the narrative and dialogue portions of a short epichoric hymn into a much longer epic narrative. In Chapter 5, too, I shall show how the *Odyssey* poet models the description of Helen's famous Egyptian drug on a generic boast drawn from short

expressions [i.e., of lament] . . . that have survived through time and have been preserved by the epic tradition." I agree, but I would push this argument even farther by narrowing the sub-genre to laments performed in hexameters. Martin (1984) 31 also notes that lament must have been a long and old tradition outside of epic. For more recent approaches to ancient Greek lament, see the essays collected in Suter (2008).

[23] See Section 6.3 below.

[24] Martin (1989) 46.

hexametrical incantations of the type that appear in some recently published fifth-century BCE inscriptions from Magna Graecia.

1.2 Mimesis of Genres in Hellenistic Poetry

In various ways, then, the Homeric poems will provide us with important insights into the earliest stages of these shorter genres performed in ritual settings and in dactylic hexameters. And it is for this reason that I have organized each of the four central chapters around a well-known Homeric episode or scene. But because modern definitions of genre depend so heavily on knowing the details about the place and timing of a performance as well as the identity of its performer(s) and audience,[25] we shall find that our second greatest source of information about these shorter genres—and hence the chronological endpoint of this study—is indeed the hexametrical poetry of the Hellenistic period, primarily the so-called "mimetic" poems of Callimachus and Theocritus, which seem to imitate accurately different ritual performances, such as cult hymns, laments, or incantations, while at the same time sketching a dramatic frame that provides important and otherwise lost details about their performance.[26] Both poets could, of course, have easily learned about these shorter hexametrical genres, either from their own life experiences or from books available in the same library at Alexandria, where they found their texts of the Homeric poems and the burgeoning commentaries on them.[27] There is a tendency, however, to assume that Callimachus closely modeled his hymns on the longer Homeric Hymns[28] or cleverly recast the content and devices of non-hexametrical poetry into the more pedestrian form of a hexametrical hymn, in the latter case either because choral and lyric meters had fallen out of fashion[29] or because

[25] See, e.g., the essays collected in Depew and Obbink (2000).

[26] The term "mimetic" describes a poem that is an imitation ("mimesis") of a performance, while at the same time being a narration ("diegesis") of it; see Harder (1992) 384–95.

[27] For hymns, see the comments of Faulkner and Hodkinson (2015) 14, about another Alexandrian poet: "Philicus' focus on the old cults of Greece and less prominent cult sites situates him well within the interests of contemporary Alexandrian poets." For hexametrical incantations, see the so-called "Philinna Papyrus" (first century BCE), a fragment of an anthology of them; they are discussed in detail by Faraone (2001b) and below in Appendix D.

[28] Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 353–61.

[29] See, e.g., Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 30, although they also suggest (pp. 32–33) that there were other, more mundane hexametrical models, for example, some of the shorter Homeric Hymns that seem designed for communal performance and end with specific requests, like "save the city," or short hymns preserved in sanctuary inscriptions and elsewhere that were actually performed for the god in the context of a festival.

of the Alexandrian's fondness for the "contamination of genres."[30] In some cases, this is true, but the situation is decidedly different with the hymns dedicated to Apollo, Athena, and Demeter, the so-called "mimetic" hymns that evoke a ritual performance, which the narrator seems to be centrally involved in or even directing.[31]

I suggest, in fact, that in his mimetic hymns Callimachus used both the content and the form of regional or local hymns that were performed at sanctuaries. He composed the *Hymn to Athena*, for example, in elegiac couplets and in a Doric dialect, and throughout he shows detailed knowledge of the cult of Athena at Argos, the place where the hymn is set.[32] Some explain this combination as a classic example of generic contamination, by which the poet purposely renders an originally choral hymn in elegiac couplets, a favorite Alexandrian meter, although it is equally easy to suppose that Callimachus knew of and was indeed imitating an epichoric Argive genre of elegiac hymns that is lost to us, but easily available to him in the library at Alexandria.[33] He wrote his hexametrical *Hymn to Demeter* in the same Doric dialect, and his readers would have surely recognized that the hymn was set during a traditional procession performed by women carrying a ritual basket to a Demeter sanctuary somewhere in the Doric world.[34] Indeed, scholars often use this poem as reliable evidence for the religious processions and activities performed in mystery cults devoted to Demeter.[35] It is a curious fact, then, that religious historians highly value the *content* of Callimachus' mimetic hymns as accurate sources for otherwise lost information about local ritual performances,[36] while literary historians suggest that these same mimetic hymns are, in fact, inaccurate sources of information about the

[30] Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 33.

[31] Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 31–33.

[32] Bulloch (1985). Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 31 note the "obsessively archaeological precision with which he refers to the actual performance."

[33] Faraone (2008) 136–37. For other parallels, Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 32 note fragments of two fourth-century elegiac hymns of Crates and another from the Argolid by Aristocles. See also the two elegiac hymns by Isidorus discussed in detail by Faraone (2012b).

[34] Although it is true that the Doric dialect in *Hymns* 5 and 6 seems to be a "cosmetic adaptation" of a poem that could have easily been composed in "epic" hexameters, it is also true that the dialect fits the Argive setting of *Hymn* 5; see Hopkinson (1984) 44–45, who nonetheless explains it in both hymns as the result of "the Hellenistic fondness of dialectical experiments" (p. 44). Even though there are no clear references to the setting of *Hymn* 6, most of the locales suggested by modern scholars—e.g., Cyrene, Cos, Cnidus, for which see Hopkinson (1984) 35–39—use the Doric dialect. Scholars have suggested that the evidence for "Attic dialectical coloring" in Philicus' fragmentary *Hymn to Demeter* likewise suggests that he chose an Attic model for his hymn; see Hunter (1996b) 31. This poem, however, used what appears to be an invented form of choliambic hexameter.

[35] Henrichs (1993).

[36] Henrichs (1993).

narrative, metrical, or linguistic *form* of Greek hymns, choosing instead to stress the poet's penchant for distorting rather than reflecting traditional generic forms. But, at least in the case of his mimetic hymns, should we not start with the assumption that Callimachus provides an accurate rendition not only of the rituals in the sanctuary, but also of the meter and dialect of the hymns that were performed there?

The poetry of Theocritus is almost entirely hexametrical,[37] and here, too, his mimetic poems have much to tell us about traditional genres performed in this meter, some even from areas outside of Alexandria, for example, on his native Sicily or on Cos and the surrounding islands, where he seems to have spent much of his time and where he would have encountered the hexametrical works of local fourth-century hexameter poets like Erinna.[38] Indeed, Theocritus displays, albeit poem by poem, the same Bakhtinian voraciousness that the Homeric poets do, although his choices tend to be more homespun. Dover pointed out many years ago, for example, that the frequent "symmetrical repetition" in Theocritus' mimetic poems is "a characteristic of folksongs, games, wedding-songs, lullabies, spells and other sub-literate categories of poetry"[39] and indeed, as we shall see, the incantation embedded in the first third of *Idyll* 2 or the *epithalamium* in *Idyll* 18 do, indeed, seem to reflect living hexametrical genres. Here, again, commentators have traditionally assumed that Theocritus is merely "translating" the content from some prosaic or lyric genre into hexameters—for example, the prose mimes of Sophron, popular songs, or love serenades—and have concluded that the "Theocritean corpus is, in fact, a veritable Noah's ark of mimetic lyric forms which have been adapted to, and hence saved by, their transference to recitative metre."[40] This conclusion is undoubtedly true for many of his other poems, but, as we shall see, the mimetic *Idylls*, at least, often reflect Theocritus' deep appreciation of traditional hexametrical genres, especially those that easily fit into Dover's "sub-literate categories of poetry."[41]

[37] Halperin (1983) 206–9.
[38] Hunter (1996b) 14–17.
[39] Dover (1971) lxii.
[40] Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 33. See earlier Gow (1952) 2.16, discussing the irregular refrains of *Idylls* 1 and 2, as well as the couplets or triplets in *Idylls* 3 and 10 as devices "for suggesting in epic verse the structure of sung verse."
[41] For the "Homeric" hymn, see *Idyll* 15.100–44 (the embedded "Adonis Song," for which see below Section 6.3) and 22.1–26 with Hunter (1996b) 124 and 128, who notes that the meter in both is in conformity with Theocritus' other " 'epicising' poems"; for the *epithalamium* see *Idyll* 18 and the discussion below in Section 2.2; for a lament with refrains, see *Idyll* 1. 64–142 (the embedded "song of Thyrsis"), with Porro (1988) and Reed (1997) 22; and for allusions to the genre of begging songs, see *Id*. 16.5–12, with Hunter (1996b) 92–94; for an embedded lullaby, see *Id*. 24.7–9 and the discussion below.

In many cases, however, choosing between a famous lyric model and a pedestrian one can be quite difficult. In a passage near the start of Theocritus' *Idyll* 24, for example, Alcmene places her hands on the heads of her twins and recites three verses (7–9):

> εὕδετ', ἐμὰ βρέφεα, γλυκερὸν καὶ ἐγέρσιμον ὕπνον·
> εὕδετ', ἐμὰ ψυχά, δύ' ἀδελφεοί, εὔσοα τέκνα·
> ὄλβιοι εὐνάζοισθε καὶ ὄλβιοι ἀῶ ἵκοισθε.
>
> Sleep, my babies, a sweet sleep from which one wakes,
> sleep, my souls, twin brothers, well-protected children.
> Rest happy, and happy may you reach the dawn.

Here the sonorous repetitions, the rhythmical and syntactical parallels between the first two lines and the internal rhymes all suggest that Theocritus imitates part of a traditional lullaby, one of Dover's "sub-literate categories."[42] Commentators, however, traditionally point to a brief fragment of a lullaby that Simonides has Danaë sing to Perseus (*Threnos* 13.18–19): εὕδε βρέφος, εὐδέτω δὲ πόντος, εὐδέτω δὲ ἄμετρον κακόν ("Sleep, baby, and let the sea sleep and let our immeasurable misfortune sleep"). They suggest, in short, that Theocritus is imitating Simonides, because the latter is an earlier and famous poet, who would have been well known to Theocritus. It is interesting to note, however, that in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, when the chorus are encouraging the eponymous hero to sleep after he has been wracked with pain, they resort to a lullaby in a heavily dactylic meter, which begins,Ὕπν' ὀδύνας ἀδαής,Ὕπνε δ' ἀλγέων, εὐαὴς ἡμῖν/ ἔλθοις, εὐαίων, εὐαίων, ὦναξ· ("Sleep, ignorant of anguish, ignorant of pains, may you come to us with gentle breath, bringing felicity, felicity, O lord!").[43] Here, too, we find the same sonorous repetitions of rhyming words and sounds (especially the prefix εὐ-), although the chorus are addressing the god Sleep, rather than the person they are trying to lull to sleep.

The traditional approach, then, is often one based strictly on relative chronology: Sophocles is imitating Simonides and Theocritus is imitating Simonides or Sophocles or both. But one can, in fact, also suggest that all three poets are recalling traditional hexametrical lullabies that perhaps each

[42] Waern (1960) begins her brief study of Greek lullabies with Theocritus' verses, but makes a formal distinction (p. 2) between "popular poetry" and "literary poetry," suggesting that "no lullaby was transposed word for word from the oral tradition to the elevated poetry" and that "it was bound to undergo linguistic, stylistic and metrical changes to fit its new setting." She is undoubtedly correct with regard to those lullabies in Greek tragedy or lyric in which the poetic diction and meters are difficult, but why insist that Theocritus had to change the meter of a traditional lullaby to put it in his poem?

[43] Sophocles *Philoctetes* 827–29.

heard as a child, lullabies performed by their own mothers or wet nurses, as they rocked them to sleep. In a number of cultures, moreover, lullabies share much in common with incantations sung over babies to protect them while they slept, an idea that is clearly reflected in Alcmene's concern that her "well-protected" children "sleep safely" and "happy reach the dawn."[44] Regarding Alcmene's lullaby, of course, there is not enough data to make a judgment, but it nicely highlights the differences in the two approaches: (i) if we imagine Theocritus composing his verses in an ivory tower influenced only by the masterpieces of Greek poetry, it is easier to assume a persistent process of imitation or allusion uninfluenced by sub-literate compositions; or (ii) if we adopt the method used in this volume, it is easier to imagine—especially in his mimetic poems—a much broader range of influences, which in addition to the "greatest hits" of older lyric and choral poetry also included traditional hexametrical performances that the poets might experience in their homes and sanctuaries. It is, in short, precisely because these mimetic poems aim at reproducing the experience of an ongoing performance in a ritual context—sometimes by deploying local dialects and referring deictically to ritual sites and performers—that we expect to find the least amount of literary influence, the greatest amount of local color, and the most information about these non-epic genres of hexametrical poetry.

1.3 Archaic and Classical Fragments

A third, and perhaps unexpected, source of information about hexametrical genres are those moments when the lyric and iambic poets of the archaic and classical periods take up this unaccustomed meter in ways that suggest they are guided by some generic constraint. Seven hexametrical fragments survive, for example, in the corpus of the seventh-century Spartan poet Alcman, some of which are thought to come from the short introductions (*prooimia*) he performed just before a chorus of unwed girls began to sing a "maiden

[44] Rosenmeyer (1991) 23–25 and Karanika (2014) 160–61. For parallel crossovers between lullaby and incantation, see Barb (1950) for medieval Europe; Frankfurter (2009) 239–40 for late-antique Egypt; and Farber (1990) for ancient Assyria, the last with numerous parallels from modern ethnography. We shall see below in Sections 5.3–4 and Appendices C and D, in fact, that dactylic hexameters were indeed the default medium for incantations in the Greek world, a practice that gives added heft to the suggestion that the verses of all three of the poets quoted above also reflect in their meter and repetitions a traditional hexametrical lullaby.

song" (*partheneion*) that he himself had also composed.[45] Fragment 26 is the longest and most famous of these introductions:[46]

> οὔ μ' ἔτι, παρσενικαὶ μελιγάρυες ἱαρόφωνοι,
> γυῖα φέρην δύναται· βάλε δὴ βάλε κηρύλος εἴην,
> ὅς τ' ἐπὶ κύματος ἄνθος ἅμ' ἀλκυόνεσσι ποτήται
> νηδεὲς ἦτορ ἔχων, ἀλιπόρφυρος ἱαρὸς ὄρνις.
>
> No longer, honey-toned, strong-voiced girls,
> can my limbs carry me. If only, if only I were a cerylus bird,
> who flies along with the halcyons over the flower of the wave
> with resolute heart, strong, sea-blue bird.

Thucydides, however, uses the same term, *prooimion*, to describe a short section of the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*, a definition that has long suggested to scholars that the Homeric hymns were themselves used as introductions to a performance—rhapsodic or otherwise—of epic narrative.[47] More recently, however, some have argued that hexametrical *prooimia* were instead introductions that praised the local god(s) prior to choral performances in their sanctuaries,[48] and that Thucydides is referring not to the entire hymn itself, but rather to a similar introductory performance to maiden performances in honor of Apollo's sister Artemis.[49] Such an approach, in fact, makes better sense of the most puzzling part of the passage that Thucydides quotes (*HHApollo* 165–68):

> ἀλλ' ἄγεθ', ἱλήκοι μὲν Ἀπόλλων Ἀρτέμιδι ξύν,
> χαίρετε δ' ὑμεῖς πᾶσαι. ἐμεῖο δὲ καὶ μετόπισθε
> μνήσασθ', ὁππότε κέν τις ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων
> ἐνθάδ' ἀνείρηται ξεῖνος ταλαπείριος ἐλθών·
>
> Come now, let Apollo be gracious and Artemis likewise,
> and farewell, all you maidens, and me in after times
> remember, whenever, some dweller upon the earth,
> a long-suffering stranger, shall visit this isle. . . .

Here, the direct address to the maidens, the quasi-autobiographic details, and first-person reference to the singer are out of place in a Homeric hymn, but they are all found in the Alcmanic hexameters quoted above.[50] The poet

[45] Terpsander was also thought to have composed *prooimia* of this sort; see Bowra (1961) 23–24 and Gerber (1970) 98–99.

[46] Text and translation by Campbell (1993).

[47] Maslov (2012).

[48] See Maslov (2009) 6–7 and (2012) reviving the argument of Koller (1956).

[49] Kousoulini (2013).

[50] Kousoulini (2013) 439–40. Nagy (1990) 375–77 and (1992a) 119–20, on the other hand, suggests that the maidens are local Delian Muses, who inspire the blind singer from Chios (= Homer), much as the local Heliconian Muses inspire Hesiod.

of the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* seems, in short, to have embedded, in the manner described above, the short genre of the Alcmanic *prooimion* into the Delian section of his hymn. We can surmise, moreover, that this ritual genre performed in a sanctuary was traditionally a hexametrical one, because elsewhere in his extant corpus Alcman uses only lyric or choral meters and it is likely that generic considerations forced him to abandon his traditional media and compose his *prooimia* in dactylic hexameters. Sappho also used hexameters in a limited manner that suggests some similar kind of generic constraint: her hexametrical fragments come only from her wedding poems, and below in Section 2.3 we shall ask why Sappho would use this meter in such a limited number of fragments, a meter that she never uses elsewhere and that is otherwise completely foreign to Lesbian poetry. The answer, I shall suggest, is that she, too, seems to have been constrained by tradition to compose her *epithalamia* in dactylic hexameters.

The iambic tradition also made use of hexameters, albeit for the purpose of parody. The sixth-century BCE poet Hipponax, for example, composed a short poem in dactylic hexameters that calls for the expulsion of an enemy or rival—a parody, it seems, of the kind of ritual poem that the Greeks sometimes chanted, as they chased human or animal scapegoats from their homes or cities.[51] Because he deploys dactylic hexameters only once in his extant repertoire, he signals that this genre, too, was also traditionally performed in hexameters.[52] And indeed, one genre of hexametrical incantations, the so-called "flee formulae," is attested as early as the Hellenistic period and seems to be related to these scapegoat chants, because they, too, directly address dangers and evils in dactylic hexameters and urge them to depart.[53] As it turns out, some of our best evidence for short hexametrical genres comes from the parodies composed a century later than Hipponax by writers of Attic comedy, who, like Hipponax, signal their parodic intent by switching to hexameters, a meter that is otherwise foreign to comic drama. Comic oracles spring to mind most easily, of course,[54] but there is one example of a parodic incantation,[55] and some hexametrical lines of a purification chant from a lost comic play of Diphilus may likewise be part of a parody of a traditional ritual

[51] Hipponax Frag. 128 (West) with a full discussion by Faraone (2004a).
[52] Not, as others have argued or assumed, because he is writing a mock epic; see Faraone (2004a) 210–11 past bibliography and discussion.
[53] See Faraone (2018b) 208–15 and Appendix D below.
[54] See Sections 4.1–2 below.
[55] See Section 5.3 below.

genre.[56] This use of dactylic hexameters during a purification rite dovetails well, of course, with their use in *pharmakos* rites, because both cases presumably involve similar gestures of expulsion. And from one of the earliest comic writers, the Sicilian Epicharmus, we have single hexametrical verse that might have been the beginning of a unison chant of the Sirens: (Frag. 121 K-A):[57] λαοὶ τοξοχίτωνες ἀκούετε Σειρηνάων ("Men clad in bow and arrows, hear the Sirens!"). Scholars have sometimes suggested that we should imagine that the Sirens' performance at *Odyssey* 12.184–91 was a choral one,[58] but if so why would Epicharmus have them chant on stage in dactylic hexameters? It is a curious fact, however, that, unlike comedy, the extant tragedies preserve only a handful of passages in stichic hexameters, for example, when Hera in a lost play of Aeschylus takes on the guise of a begging priestess and performs a hymn to some local Argive nymphs or when Neoptolemos in Sophocles' *Philoctetes* produces four hexameters, in which he recalls and then revises the famous oracle that informed the Greeks that Troy could not fall without the bow of Heracles.[59]

Finally, inscriptions of the archaic and classical periods are another rich source for short hexametrical genres of a ritual nature. By the end of the seventh century, we begin to see various kinds of public genres composed in dactylic hexameters, such as dedicatory inscriptions or epitaphs, the latter of which are discussed in detail just below in Section 2.1. More important to this study, however, are the more private poems, the oldest of which is the "Nestor's Cup Inscription," a hexametrical couplet that in the late eighth century BCE was

[56] Diphilus Frag 126; Parker (1983) 207, however, sees the use of the hexameter as comic hyperbole: i.e., treating the quotidian as an epic event, a traditional approach, as was discussed earlier, that tends to see the Homeric or Hesiodic corpora as the sole referent for all later hexametrical texts.

[57] The translation is that of Rusten (2011) 72.

[58] Richardson (2011b) 20–21 notes that their boasts to universal knowledge (ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ . . . ἴδμεν δ', ὅσσα γένηται ἐπὶ χθονὶ) recall the famous claims of the Muses in the *Theogony* about true and false song and he suggests that "both songs appear to be choral, and both stress the divine knowledge of the singers"; see also Bowie (2011) 49–65; Peponi (2012) 76–80; and Murnaghan (2018) 171.

[59] *Hymn*: Aeschylus *Semele* Frag. 220a, with Sommerstein (2008) 230–31. The papyrological evidence suggests that this hymn was at least thirty dactylic hexameters long and begins νύμφαι ναμερτεῖς, κυδραὶ θεαί, αἷcιν ἀγείρω/ Ἰνάχου Ἀργείου ποταμοῦ παιcὶν βιοδώροις,/ αἵ τε παρίcταν ται πᾶcιν βροτέοιcιν ἐπ' ἔργ[οις ("Infallible nymphs, glorious goddesses, for whom I collect alms, life-giving daughters of the Argive river Inachus, who attend upon all mortal act[ivities])" in the translation of Sommerstein. *Oracle*: Sophocles *Philoctetes* 839–42 with Pretagostini (1982) 164–65; Halperin (1983) 211; and Schein (2013) ad loc. There are some even more puzzling hexameters near the end of the *Trachiniae*: three five-verse sections of recited hexameters, the first and last spoken by Heracles (1010–14 and 1031–40) and the middle one split between Hyllus and the Old Man; see Easterling (1982) ad loc. and Pretagostini (1982) 165–66, who sees an allusion in an epic mode to Heracles' labors. The syntax of all three sections is mangled and possibly corrupt, so one cannot venture a guess as to what genre, if any, Sophocles is gesturing toward.

scratched onto a cup from Ischia and appears to be an erotic curse or a parody of it.[60] There are, moreover, two kinds of longer ritual texts in hexameters that were inscribed into small metal sheets. The first are the so-called "Orphic"[61] gold leaves or gold tablets, which appear to be a kind of passport for the dead and which have been suggested as a model for the advice that Circe gives Odysseus before his visit to Tiresias.[62] Textual variations in these verses show us that they were being orally composed long before they appear in the late-classical and early-Hellenistic graves of West Greece, Thessaly, and Crete.[63] Of equal importance are a series of lead amulets, also from West Greece and Crete, which preserve protective hexametrical charms. The most important are the so-called "Getty Hexameters," which date to the late fifth century BCE and probably come from Selinus.[64] They run to nearly fifty lines of dactylic hexameters and seem designed to protect a house or a town from a variety of evils.[65] A close examination of the parallel texts from Western Locri, Himera, and Phalasarna reveals that these verses, too, were probably the product of an earlier period of oral composition and performance.[66] Such incantatory hexameters might, in fact, have been a regional Sicilian specialty in the classical period, because, as we shall see in Section 5.2 and Appendix C, Empedocles boasts of his own mastery of hexametrical incantations for healing the sick, as well as for controlling the weather and summoning the dead for necromancy.

1.4 Dactylic Hexameters

This study, finally, raises the question why hexameters were used so widely from the archaic period onward, in so many regions and for so many different genres. One claim, explicit or implicit—and one that I shall

[60] Discussed in detail in Section 5.3.

[61] Modern scholars are eager to assign to Orpheus the authorship of these gold tablets, but these texts are, in fact, never mentioned by any ancient author and their designation as "Orphic" stems entirely from the plausible idea that, since Orpheus was a legendary hexametrical poet and since he successfully visited the underworld and returned, any early hexametrical text that gives advice on the topography of or etiquette in Hades must surely be his. For some snapshots of this important debate, see the introductions to Graf and Johnston (2007) and Bernabé and San Cristóbal (2008) and the essays collected in Edmonds (2011b).

[62] See Section 4.3 below.

[63] Janko (1984 and 2016).

[64] See, e.g., the essays collected in Faraone and Obbink (2013) and Antonetti (2018).

[65] Faraone (2013c).

[66] Janko (2013).

question throughout this study—is a scholarly assumption that we might call "Homeric hegemony," which runs something like this: because in our extant sources Homeric poetry appears first, shorter poems composed in dactylic hexameters and attested in later sources must necessarily be imitating epic poetry. But this approach confuses, of course, the date of a genre's appearance as a written text in the historical record with the date of its invention as an oral performance. The genre of the narrative or rhapsodic hymn must have been known, of course, to the composers of epic narratives, because they themselves presumably used the genre when they also composed such hymns as introductions for their longer epics.[67] Epichoric or cult hymns, on the other hand, seem to be a different genre, because they focus more tightly on human and divine interactions and on etiological explanations for the origins of a particular ritual, festival, or temple. But here, too, commentators assume Homeric priority, when they suggest, for example, that Callimachus models his two mimetic hymns on the sections of the Homeric hymns to Apollo and Demeter that describe rituals and give etiologies for them.[68] In Chapter 3, however, we shall see that this argument can be flipped on its head and that it is, in fact, more likely that the composers of these Homeric hymns knew and embedded local cult hymns from Delos, Crisa, or Eleusis into their own Panhellenic narratives.

The same is true for oracles. As we shall see in Chapter 4, Herodotus and Aristophanes give us a clear understanding of the generic features of hexametrical oracles performed in the classical period, and these oracles share a number of formal characteristics with the speeches of some characters in the *Odyssey*, for example, Tiresias, who is indeed called a prophet in the poem and whose words are labeled as prophetic. But when Parke and Wormell, while discussing Delphic oracles, claim that "[t]he form, usage, and vocabulary of the responses derive accordingly from epic, as was natural in view of their hexametrical verse form," they, too, seem to be confusing the chronological precedence of epic poems with the origins of the oracle as an orally composed and remembered genre.[69] But, since the composers

[67] See, e.g., Thalmann (1984) 120–21 and Faulkner (2011) 16–19. The embedded song that Demodocus sings in the *Odyssey*, about how Hephaestus binds the naked and adulterous Aphrodite and Ares in his bed, seems to reflect this tradition; see, e.g., Burkert (1960); Thalmann (1984) 118, however, thinks it reflects a lyric rather than hexametrical performance.

[68] Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 365–67.

[69] Parke and Wormell (1956) 2.xxiii. Flower (2008) 220 also assumes some kind of Homeric influence or training when he says that "the Pythia's dactylic hexameters are . . . not beyond the compositional ability in ex tempore composition of a Greek, who had a sustained exposure to Homer" or (p. 221) "any Pythia exposed to epic hexameters could have composed oracles." But see more recently

of the *Odyssey* and the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* both show an awareness of the oracular procedures at Delphi, why would they be ignorant of the genre of hexametrical oracles that were performed there? In this case, too, I shall argue that the instructional speeches of Circe and Tiresias in *Odyssey* 10 and 11 clearly imitate the hexametrical genre of the oracle in order to invest these characters with a special kind of authority.

Finally, a few words about the dactylic hexameter itself. It is, of course, one of the easiest meters to learn in Greek[70] and as such it is not hard to imagine a multitude of individuals capable of composing and performing them. This is not to say that they were all polished poets, as the occasionally faulty hexameters found in early Greek inscriptions or quoted by Herodotus and Plato attest.[71] The simplicity of dactylic hexameters also helps to explain why, especially prior to the classical period, hexametrical poetry was the medium for so many types of discourse in the Greek world. In addition to those listed by Aeschylus in the *Frogs* at the start of this Introduction, we might add as well the philosophical speculations of Parmenides and Empedocles or the latter's lost historical poem about the invasion of Xerxes.[72] Indeed, it is a well-known fact that only in the late-archaic and early-classical periods do iconoclast philosophers like Heraclitus and historians like Hecateaus begin to choose prose as the more convenient and superior medium for their thoughts.[73] But one should also stress that at least until the end of the classical period, dactylic hexameters remained a special kind of meter, because they alone were thought to be capable of bridging the gap between gods and mortals as a kind of "ritualized communication."[74] As a result, archaic hexametrical poems

González (2013) 288, who concludes that the "use at Delphi of hexameters to compose poetic oracles was not a derivation of the Homeric or Hesiodic oral traditions of epic, but a related consequence of the notional association of epic diction with divine speech."

[70] See, e.g., Plato *Phaedo* 60d, where Cebes remarks that, while in prison, Socrates has been versifying Aesop and a proem to Apollo, the latter of which was probably in hexameters; see Maslov (2012) 196. With regard to the Pythia at Delphi, see Lloyd-Jones (1976) 67 ("the rapid improvisation of hexameters is less difficult than some people imagine; it is helped by practice") and Flower (2008) 220–21.

[71] Tod (1933) defends an "inelegant" Delphic oracle quoted by Herodotus (7.220) by adducing other examples from early inscriptions and the criticism of oracular poetry by Plutarch *Mor*. 396c–d; and Lucian *Jup. Trag*. 6. He also notes a pair of metrically faulty hexameters in Plato *Phaedrus* 252b. González (2013) 284, suggests that this is the reason why oracle mongers were parodied in Attic comedy, but, as Smith (1989) has shown, the mockery was directed at the greedy oracle monger, not at the oracles themselves or at the belief in oracles.

[72] See, e.g., Thalmann (1984) 113–14 ("the most important mode of oral communication in Greece of the eighth century BC").

[73] Aesop as well; see Kurke (2011).

[74] Petrovic and Petrovic (2006) 168.

seem to have been the only ones to which the Greeks in later periods applied various techniques of interpretation on the grounds that what the inspired poets say in these poems may be in need of exegesis.[75] This point is most obvious in the case of oracles, whose obscure details were often subjected to competing interpretations and reinterpretations, but the fifth-century BCE author of the Derveni papyrus also worked under this same understanding, when he applied allegorical interpretations to a hexametrical theogony composed by "Orpheus," as did those literary critics who used similar techniques to interpret the Homeric poems, but never, to my knowledge, the texts of tragedy and comedy or those of the choral and lyric poets. This special status presumably arose because the dactylic hexameter was the one meter that—as poets and prophets insisted—the gods, especially the Muses or Apollo, inspired in human performers or otherwise transmitted to them. Indeed, as we shall see in Chapter 5, some texts from the classical period even claim that it was Paean or Orpheus who composed hexametrical incantations to protect mankind, or that it was Aphrodite who taught the first erotic incantation to mortals.

There is one remaining and vexing question about dactylic hexameters: whether the Greeks were singing, chanting, or simply speaking when they performed them.[76] The evidence is, in fact, contradictory. Homeric epics and hymns repeatedly portray the performers of heroic tales, hymns, and theogonies as singers, who accompanied themselves on some kind of lyre, but the Hesiodic poet apparently performed while holding a staff. And all of the later historical evidence for hexametrical performances at festivals supports the Hesiodic model, adding that when rhapsodes performed hexametrical poems, they held their eponymous staff (*rhabdos*) and pounded it on the ground to keep time. These contradictory facts have led most scholars to the uncomfortable conclusion that the allegedly musical performance that we see in the Homeric poems is simply a poetic convention, representing "an imaginary past that never really existed."[77] Thus we can assume that, when it came to performing hexameters, the level of musicality was rather low and that the "singers" ranged from simple speech to chanting to recitative.[78]

[75] Struck (2004) passim, but especially pages 150–51.

[76] Most of what follows is indebted to West (1981b) and Gainsford (2015) 74–77.

[77] See West (1981b); Nagy (1990) 20–24; and the recent survey by Gainsford (2015) 75–77, the quotation appears on p. 77.

[78] Even West (1981b) 116, who wishes to keep the lyre, suggests two scenarios: (i) performers kept a rhythm on a four-stringed lyre, as they sang "a recitative based on word accents"; or (ii) moved a rod or staff to the rhythm, as they spoke or chanted them. Nagy (1990) 359–60 and Maslov (2009)

There is some evidence, as we shall see in Chapter 6, for group laments in dactylic hexameters, during which a series of different women sing short solos punctuated by communal responses. The brevity of these solos, as well as the surviving evidence in modern Greek laments, suggests that they might have been sung to a simple and repeated melody, albeit without musical accompaniment, a format that we shall explore in Section 2.3, with regard to Theocritus' *Idyll* 18, a mimetic poem in five ten-verse stanzas that embeds and imitates the *epithalamium* that Helen's girlfriends sang to her after she and Menelaus retired to their wedding chamber.

1.5 Summary

In the end, I shall count it a success if I can convince my readers that already in the early-archaic period there existed a number of short hexametrical genres performed in a variety of ritual contexts, for example, at religious festivals, oracular consultations, weddings, or funerals, and that Homeric, Hesiodic, and Hellenistic poets, expert hexametrical craftsmen in their own right, were well aware of these genres, embedded or imitated them in their own poems, and used them to play on the generic expectations of their audiences or readers.

6–7, working from Koller (1956), suggest that the appearance in the *Iliad* of singers with lyres may reflect the fact that the kitharodic prelude was a pre-epic hexameter form. In general I follow Nagy's helpful distinction between "poetry" performed in *recitative* (e.g., compositions in hexameter, elegiac distich, and iambic trimeter) and "song," performed in a *melodic* manner to the accompaniment of music; see Nagy (1990) 11 and 19–20. Ford (1992) offers similar definitions in the negative: "epos was normally not sung" (p. 17) and "epic as a sub-class of unsung-poetry" (p. 29).

2

Some Preliminary Soundings

We have seen, then, that hexametrical verses—embedded or mimetically enacted, bona fide or parodic—point to the existence of a number of short hexametrical genres—for example, oracles, incantations, or *pharmakos* chants—that were performed in the archaic and classical periods, but because so many of the texts surveyed above are fragments or unique testimonials, it is often difficult to move beyond the realm of suggestion. In what follows, however, I shall make some preliminary trials of the method to be used in this volume, first by reviewing two cases—epitaphs and *hypothêkai*—for which scholars, both ancient and modern, have argued that the Homeric poet is using a preexisting hexametrical genre. We then turn to Sappho's hexametrical fragments to see how we might use a mimetic poem like Theocritus' *Idyll* 18 to understand their original performance context. In the final section, we survey the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer* to get a broader sense of the range of short genres that a hexametrical poet might be expected to perform in the late-archaic or early-classical period.

2.1 Hector's "Oral Epitaph" and Peleus' *Hypothêkê*

We saw earlier that in order to describe and trace the history of shorter and ritually based hexametrical genres we needed to tweak current approaches to character speech in Homer, which is sometimes assumed to reflect a kind of "primary" speech genre usually performed in prose, for example, a general's exhortation to his troops. I suggested, however, that some of these speech-acts can be more narrowly and accurately defined as hexametrical genres, whose identity can be confirmed with the help of later texts in the same meter. But once we have established clear parallels between a Homeric text and later hexametrical poems, how can we show that the Homeric poet is imitating a traditional genre well known in his own time, and that the later witnesses are not simply imitating the Homeric poem? In this section, we shall examine as preliminary test cases two short genres, the epitaph and the

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hypothêkê, which have seemed to ancient scholiasts and modern scholars alike to merit the label of poetic genre and which do indeed reflect a standard or generic form tied to the hexametrical verses in which they appear.

We begin with recent discussions of Hector's so-called "oral epitaph" in *Iliad* 7, in which he first imagines his upcoming victory in one-on-one combat with a yet-to-be-named Greek champion and then describes the imposing grave monument that the Greeks will heap up over his dead opponent (*Iliad* 7.87–91):

> καὶ ποτέ τις εἴπῃσι καὶ ὀψιγόνων ἀνθρώπων
> νηῒ πολυκλήϊδι πλέων ἐπὶ οἴνοπα πόντον·
> ἀνδρὸς μὲν τόδε σῆμα πάλαι κατατεθνηῶτος,
> ὅν ποτ' ἀριστεύοντα κατέκτανε φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ.
> ὥς ποτέ τις ἐρέει· τὸ δ' ἐμὸν κλέος οὔ ποτ' ὀλεῖται.
>
> And at some point someone among the mortals of the future,
> while sailing in his many-oared ship, will say:
> "This is the tomb of a man dead long ago,
> whom once, although he was fighting bravely, glorious Hector slew."
> Thus someone will say and my glory will not be destroyed.

This is a curious passage in which Hector "quotes" a hexametrical couplet, which—as ancient commentators were quick to note—has a clearly "epigrammatic" or "epitaphic" style or feel to it.[1] Modern scholars concur with this view and point out a number of similarities between Hector's boast and the hexametrical epitaphs of the late-archaic and early-classical period. According to earlier explanations, the later epitaphic poets were simply imitating the Homeric passage or were, at least, reflecting Homeric language and ideas.[2] In the last quarter of a century, however, scholars have grown increasingly uneasy with this approach, suggesting that Hector's couplet itself reflects some kind of "oral epitaph,"[3] reads "as an epitaph,"[4] echoes "epitaphic

[1] See the T Scholia at 7.86b and 89a and [Plutarch] *On Homer* 2.215 with the discussions in the groundbreaking essay of Vox (1975), followed by Scodel (1992) 59; Elmer (2005) 1–7; and Clay (2016) 188–90, the last of whom also notes the comments of the bT Scholia, "He carves an epitaph of two verses on the grave."

[2] See, e.g., the treatment of the Corcyra epitaph (quoted and discussed below), which Lumpe (1963) and Friedlander and Hoffleit (1948) 30 saw as modeled closely on Hector's words; Petrovic (2016) provides the most recent and astutely measured treatment, offering a case-by-case assessment. He dismisses (pp. 51–52), for example, these assertions about the Corcyra epitaph, because the Homeric passage and the inscription share only three words, but he does think that the Croesus epitaph (also discussed below) imitates the passage because nearly all of the words in the inscription appear in the Homeric poems.

[3] De Jong (1987) 77–78 cites *CEG* 145 as a parallel, but she notes how it differs in two ways from real epitaphs: (i) they are spoken by a passerby, not by the stone to the passersby, and (ii) the content of the "epitaph" reveals more about Hector than about the person imagined to speak it.

[4] Young (1983) 39–40 n. 24.

language,"[5] or is a "quasi-epitaph."[6] This recent change of heart about Hector's oral epitaph has been so radical that one scholar has recently suggested that the *Iliad* poet was even familiar with inscribed epitaphs,[7] an unlikely proposal, but one that nicely underscores the difficulties raised by the passage. Such problems can perhaps best be solved by supposing along with Raubitschek and Day that there existed in Homeric times an orally composed genre of epitaph that was performed in dactylic hexameters at the burial and reperformed in later times at the grave,[8] a practice so well known to the poet of the *Iliad* that he could in this passage make a parody of it to underscore Hector's excessive pride in his prowess and his tragic ignorance about his own fast-approaching death. Their hypothesis also explains the brevity of the extant epitaphs in dactylic hexameters: they were simply the opening lines of a longer poem praising the dead man and they served in the years after his death as a prompt to recite the entire poem.[9]

The devil is in the details, of course, and here, as we shall do throughout this volume, we should inquire (i) what syntactic and other features encourage both ancient and modern readers alike to suggest that Hector's couplet belongs to the genre of epitaph, and (ii) whether one should explain these similarities in strictly chronological terms (i.e., the later epitaphs imitate the Homeric text), or as independent evidence for the existence of an early and persistent hexametrical genre that began as an oral performance and was eventually inscribed in stone. To begin, we should stress that the parallels between Hector's "oral epitaph" and the extant epitaphs of archaic and classical

[5] Scodel (1992) 58–62 provides a long thoughtful discussion noting (i) that the poet composes "in an epigraphic style" (p. 58); (ii) it is formally close to an epitaph, but is an anti-epitaph, because it excludes the name of the deceased (p. 59); (iii) the poet displays "epic's awareness of epitaph" (p. 59); and (iv) "epic is familiar with epitaphs, though not the developed verse epitaph familiar from the inscriptions (which appear only later), but prose versions that may have come from the Near East" (p. 61). To this last point she adds that the poet "associates the epitaphic style with Hector [i.e., an easterner] rather than an Achaean" and then concludes (p. 61), "Despite the gap in time between Homer and the surviving epitaphs, it is likeliest that the apparent echoes of epitaphic language in epic are what they seem to be." See also Svenbro (1988) 22, who refers to a "tradition non écrite."

[6] Elmer (2005) 6.

[7] Clay (2016).

[8] Day (1989) 21 and 27 "oral encomium" and "praise song which the uninscribed σῆμα evokes spontaneously" and Raubitschek (1968) 5–6.

[9] The rare examples of longer archaic epitaphs in hexameters are composed line by line in such a way that they could easily be expanded or contracted, depending on the size of the monument or the time allotted to the performance; see, e.g., all six of the examples discussed by Bowie (2010) 355–60. The length of one of these epitaphs (*CEG* 143) can be explained by the size of the monument: it was carved continuously around the stone curb of the dead man's tumulus and thus perhaps quoted as much of the full encomiastic poem as necessary to fill the space.

date—which appear first in hexameters and then in elegiac couplets[10]—are, in fact, the strongest among those texts composed for soldiers who perish in battle, precisely like Hector's presumed Greek victim. Hector, for example, begins by connecting a grave monument with a person in the genitive case, "This is the tomb of a man" (ἀνδρὸς μὲν τόδε σῆμα), followed by a relative clause that begins at the start of the second verse, "whom once (ὅν ποτ')...." Such an introduction has some general parallels, of course, with the opening lines of epics and hymns, "Sing, Muse, of so-and-so, who(m) . . . ," but here the deictic emphasis ("this is the tomb") and the indefinite temporal adverb ποτέ ("once upon a time") attached to the relative pronoun both refer to the point of view of a future audience (in the case of oral recitals) or to future readers (in the case of inscribed epitaphs).[11] Indeed, this use of ποτέ is so common in epitaphs and on victory monuments that it has been dubbed "inscriptional ποτέ."[12]

The parallels are instructive. A mid-sixth-century statue base from Attica, for example, bids us in an elegiac couplet:[13] στῆθι καὶ οἴκτιρον Κροίσου παρὰ σῆμα θανόντος,/ ὅν ποτ' ἐνὶ προμάχοις ὤλεσε θοῦρος Ἄρης ("Halt and show pity at the grave of dead Croesus, whom once raging Ares destroyed among the fore-fighters").[14] Here the address to someone standing near the grave establishes the deictic context and we find that in addition to the initial identification of the monument and its owner (Κροίσου παρὰ σῆμα), each verse ends in a fashion quite similar to what we find in Hector's boast (*Iliad* 7.89–90): ἀνδρὸς . . . σῆμα . . . κατατεθνηῶτος and ὅν ποτ' . . . κατέκτανε φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ. Similar epitaphs include two "Simonidean" examples connected with the Persian Wars. The first celebrates the Athenians "who once destroyed their youth on behalf of their father-land" (οἵ ποτε καλλιχόρου περὶ πατρίδος ὠλέσαθ' ἥβαν) and the second honors in elegiac couplets the famously loyal Spartan seer, who refused to leave the side of his king at Thermopylae: "This is the memorial (*mnêma*) of illustrious Megistias, whom once the Medes killed as they crossed the river Spercheios (ὅν ποτε Μῆδοι/ Σπερχειὸν ποταμὸν κτεῖναν ἀμειψάμενοι)."[15] In the hexametrical examples, then, these

[10] Down to the mid-sixth century BCE all inscribed poems are in dactylic hexameters, at which point elegiac couplets appear and (by 400 BCE) become predominant; see Mickey (1981) 42.

[11] See Young (1983) 36–37, who lists six inscriptions, all of them epitaphs from the late sixth or early fifth century.

[12] Coined by Young (1983) and noted by all of the articles cited in notes 1–11 above.

[13] Discussed in all of the articles cited in notes 1–11 above.

[14] *SEG* 10.461.

[15] Young (1983) 36–37 cites these two examples from Peek (1960) nos. 9 and 76 (= Simonides 49 and 6 [Page 1942]), which date to the first half of the fifth century. We need not be concerned with

epitaphic constructions usually comprise a couplet with a regular metrical alignment: the first begins with the soldier's name in the genitive and the deictic focus on his *sêma* or *mnêma*, while the second starts with a relative clause ("who[m] once . . .") that praises the heroic circumstances of his death.[16] If these parallels were limited solely to vocabulary and syntax, they would be evidence for a shared speech genre and nothing more, but, because the vocabulary and syntax appear in the same *sedes* of the hexametrical verse, the similarities run much more deeply. This conclusion is also suggested in the negative: we do not find this specific type of construction anywhere else in archaic epic narrative aside from the boast of Hector quoted above and a similar prediction that he makes to his wife Andromache, when he imagines how she, enslaved and weeping, will serve as a kind of living grave monument for himself, after the Greeks have killed him.[17]

There is one more important detail that links Hector's boasts to an independent epitaphic genre. He describes his unnamed opponent as one who once perished "while fighting bravely (ἀριστεύοντα)," a participle that also appears in archaic military epitaphs, such as the Boeotian gravestone of a man named Phanes, which describes him as a soldier "w[ho] once fighting bravely amidst the fore-fighters [perished] (ὅς ποτ' ἀριστεύων ἐν προμάχοις [ἔθανε])." The participle likewise appears in a Thessalian epitaph that identifies itself as "the memorial (*mnêma*) of Pyridas, who . . . perished while fighting by very bravely for this land (ὅς . . . πὲρ γᾶς τᾶσδε πολλὸν ἀριστεύων ἔθανε)."[18] A Corcyrian stele even describes this kind of *aristeia* with a participle in the accusative case, just as Hector does:[19] σᾶμα τόδε Ἀρνιάδα· χαροπὸς τόνδ' ὄλεσεν Ἄρες . . . πολλὸν ἀριστεύοντα κατὰ στονόεσαν ἀυτάν ("This is the *sêma* of Arniadas. Him fiery-eyed Ares destroyed . . . as he was fighting very bravely in the groaning battle"). Here and in the examples above we also see that, if an epitaphic poet deigns to mention the killer of a warrior at all, he designates "furious" or "fiery-eyed Ares"—presumably "War"

the debates over the Simonidean authorship, because we are interested in the generic form of these inscriptions, rather than their author.

[16] Day (1989) 19: "*CEG* contains twenty-five relative clauses with the deceased as the antecedent, and at least sixteen explicitly justify the rendering of praise."

[17] *Iliad* 6.459–63: "And at some point someone will say, as he sees you weeping, 'This is the wife of Hector who was pre-eminent in fighting among the horse-taming Trojans, when they fought around Ilion.'"

[18] *CEG* 112 (c. 500 BCE?) and *CEG* 118 (early fifth century?). The question marks here and in n. 19 indicate the uncertainty of the *CEG* editor.

[19] *CEG* 145 (c. 600 BCE?).

personified—or the actual enemy in their corporate sense, such as "the Medes" who killed Megistias in one of the "Simonidean" epitaphs quoted above. In his spoken epitaph, however, Hector has turned these conventions completely upside down by eliding the name of the deceased man (the first and most important datum in an epitaph) and by replacing the god Ares with himself: "whom once . . . glorious Hector slew. . . ."[20]

We have seen, then, how specific parallels in vocabulary, syntax, brevity of expression, and word placement in the verse have encouraged the ancient and modern claim that Hector's couplet was in some way epigrammatic or epitaphic. But now we need to move to the second question raised earlier: do we explain these parallels in strictly chronological terms and claim that the late-archaic and early-classical epitaphs imitate the Homeric couplet in *Iliad* 7?[21] Or do the Homeric passage and the later inscriptions all reflect some early hexametrical genre of oral epitaph, presumably performed at graveside? More recently scholars have, as we saw above, trended toward the second opinion,[22] and they have done so primarily because Hector seems to violate or even parody the expected norms of the epitaphic genre that we find in the later texts, especially when he elides the name of the dead man and places his own epithet and name prominently at the end of the couplet.[23] According to proper etiquette, of course, this is either a blunder or a pointed inversion of the genre, an "anti-epitaph," as Scodel aptly describes it.[24] One can, of course, explain this apparent gaffe by the sequence of the narrative: at this point in time Hector leaves out his victim's name, because the Greeks have not, in fact, announced the name of his opponent. But as some have pointed out, this epitaph encourages two levels of interpretation: at the dramatic level of the narrative, Hector orally performs an incomplete or malicious epitaph, which praises himself as a killer, but, on another level connected with the larger design of the monumental poem, the poet of the *Iliad* is clearly playing with his audience's knowledge of the immense

[20] Scodel (1992) and Clay (2016) 194.

[21] Trümpy (2010) 179 speaks, in fact, of the *resistance* of archaic composers of epitaphs "to specific Homeric influence."

[22] Muth and Petrovic (2012) argue that when the Croesus epitaph names Ares as the killer, it is imitating Hector's words, but replacing the hero with Ares, who is the male figure carved on Croesus' tombstone and stands above the inscription; see also Petrovic (2016) 52–54. There are, however, no parallels for tombstones that depict the god said to have killed the deceased, instead of the deceased himself. There is also the problem of the parallel use during the Persian Wars of placing "the Medes" in the role of Ares; here it is impossible to imagine any depiction of the killers.

[23] Martin (1989) 137 sums up the anomaly succinctly by saying that the passage "echoes the diction of attested epitaphs, but the dead hero remains nameless, obliterated by Hektor's reputation."

[24] Scodel (1992) 59.

tumulus built for Hector at the very end of the poem, in which case Hector has unwittingly and tragically described his own grave mound and has anticipated his own orally performed epitaph.[25] In this case, then, imagining a future navigator pointing out a huge tumulus and recalling the deeds of "glorious Hector" would be entirely appropriate.

Ancient and modern commentators have also identified another kind of character speech as both a "speech type-scene" and an independent hexametrical genre: the *hypothêkê*.[26] But, whereas the generic shape of Hector's "oral epitaph" raised concerns about anachronism, the generic status of the *hypothêkê* presents somewhat different problems. According to the Homeric scholiasts, the *hypothêkê* is a speech of advice usually given by an older man to a younger, for example, Peleus' parting advice to Achilles, as remembered by Odysseus:[27]

> τέκνον ἐμόν, κάρτος μὲν Ἀθηναίη τε καὶ Ἥρη
> δώσουσ', αἴ κ' ἐθέλωσι, σὺ δὲ μεγαλήτορα θυμὸν
> ἴσχειν ἐν στήθεσσι· φιλοφροσύνη γὰρ ἀμείνων·
> ληγέμεναι δ' ἔριδος κακομηχάνου, ὄφρα σε μᾶλλον
> τίωσ' Ἀργείων ἠμὲν νέοι ἠδὲ γέροντες.
>
> My child, Athena and Hera will give you strength,
> if they wish, but you yourself restrain your great heart
> within your breast. For friendliness is better.
> And leave off from mischievous strife, in order that all the more
> the Argives might honor you, both the young and the old.

Another example is the sage advice that the disguised Poseidon gives to Aeneas as he rescues him on the battlefield from certain death at the hands of Achilles:[28]

> Αἰνεία, τίς σ' ὧδε θεῶν ἀτέοντα κελεύει
> ἀντία Πηλεΐωνος ὑπερθύμοιο μάχεσθαι,
> ὃς σεῦ ἅμα κρείσσων καὶ φίλτερος ἀθανάτοισιν;
> ἀλλ' ἀναχωρῆσαι, ὅτε κεν συμβλήσεαι αὐτῷ,
> μὴ καὶ ὑπὲρ μοῖραν δόμον Ἄδος εἰσαφίκηαι.
> αὐτὰρ ἐπεί κ' Ἀχιλεὺς θάνατον καὶ πότμον ἐπίσπῃ,
> θαρσήσας δὴ ἔπειτα μετὰ πρώτοισι μάχεσθαι·
> οὐ μὲν γάρ τίς σ' ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν ἐξεναρίξει.

[25] See Nagy (1979) 28–29 and 340–43 and Scodel (1992) for these different levels of interpretation. For earlier attempts to locate this tomb in the Troad, see Finkelberg (2002) 151–53, who suggests instead that the passage in *Iliad* 7 is indebted to the account in the *Cypria* of Protesilaus' death and funeral mound on the other side of the Hellespont.

[26] Athenaeus 8.364a–d, with Friedländer (1913) 571–72. My discussion throughout this section relies heavily on Horne (2017) 34–41.

[27] *Iliad* 9.254–58, with the bT Scholia at 9.257–58 and the discussion of Horne (2017) 34–35.

[28] *Iliad* 20.332–39, with the discussion of Horne (2017) 35–36.

> Aeneas, which of the gods bids you thus recklessly
> to fight against the arrogant son of Peleus,
> who is stronger than you and dearer to the immortals?
> Withdraw whenever you might encounter him,
> lest you arrive at the home of Hades before your fated time.
> But whenever Achilles meets his death and fate,
> then take courage and fight among the first ranks.
> For no other Achaean will slay you.

The scholiasts describe both of these speeches by Peleus and Poseidon as *hypothêkai*, and they do, indeed, share important generic features keyed to a tripartite structure:[29] (i) an apostrophe at the very beginning; (ii) a command usually in the infinitive;[30] and (iii) an explanation in the form of a gnome, which is introduced by ἐπεί or γάρ or with a purpose clause. In Peleus' advice to Achilles, this structure plays out as "my child" (τέκνον ἐμόν) at the very beginning—"restrain (ἴσχειν) your heart!"—"for (γάρ) friendliness is better (φιλοφροσύνη ἀμείνων)." This trio is then followed by another pair of command—"leave off (ληγέμεναι) strife!"—and explanation: "in order that (ὄφρα) they honor you more." And in the speech of Poseidon, we find the very same pattern: Aeneas' name in the vocative is the very first word, and the advice and explanation are again doubled: (i) "withdraw (ἀναχωρῆσαι) . . . lest (μὴ) you arrive in Hades," and (ii) "fight (μάχεσθαι) among the first ranks, for (γάρ) no other will slay you."

There are at least sixteen *hypothêkai* in the *Iliad*,[31] where we can see what seems to be a repeated rhetorical sequence, which is tied in some important ways, as we saw above in the case of the epitaph, to the structure of the hexametrical verse. There is, moreover, evidence that in the late-archaic or classical period, such *hypothêkai* could be gathered together, like oracles, into collections of verse of a generic type. Especially important was the lost Hesiodic collection of the *Hypothêkai of Chiron*, which seem to have taken the same form as the Homeric examples discussed above, as we can see in

[29] Horne (2017) 35, developing a passing comment of Munding (1959) 69.

[30] Horne (2017) 36 n. 16.

[31] Horne (2017) 34–37. Nestor, for example, gives three speeches that take or include this form: one to Agamemnon urging him to take control of the troops (*Iliad* 2.337–68), another brief command to the camp guards (10.192–93), and a much longer one to his son Antilochus, which gives detailed advice on how to win a chariot race (23.306–48). The scholiasts' idea that the *hypothêkê* is a specifically male genre is nicely stated in the negative at 6.433, where they bridle at the fact that Andromache uses the form to advise her husband, Hector; "the *hypothêkê*," they insist, "is not appropriate for a woman." According to the scholiasts, the *hypothêkê* was also appropriate for divine advice to humans. In addition to Poseidon's advice to Aeneas (quoted above), we find Poseidon using it in his speech to Achilles, when he struggles to overcome the river Xanthus (*Iliad* 21.288–98). In the *Odyssey*, however, these hierarchies are not so clear. Athena, for example, uses the *hypothêkê* thrice, once while disguised as the elder Mentor (*Od*. 1.279–86) and twice, as a young girl (7.28–36 and 48–52). See Horne (2017) 36–37 for a full discussion.

this hexametrical fragment of a lost comic play entitled *Chiron*, which was perhaps written by Pherecrates:[32]

> μηδὲ σύ γ' ἄνδρα φίλον καλέσας ἐπὶ δαῖτα θάλειαν
> ἄχθου ὁρῶν παρεόντα· κακὸς γὰρ ἀνὴρ τόδε ῥέζει·
> ἀλλὰ μάλ' εὔκηλος τέρπου φρένα τέρπε τ' ἐκεῖνον.
>
> You, at least, when you have invited a friend to a fulsome banquet,
> do not be annoyed when you see him present. For an evil man does this.
> But, entirely free from care, be happy in your mind and make him happy.

Here, as in the case of Hipponax' *pharmakos* chant or an Aristophanic oracle, the switch from comic meters to hexameters immediately tips us off that the *hypothêkê* was, in fact, a specifically hexametrical genre, and in this case the three hallmarks are once again carefully arranged in the hexameter verse in the same manner that we saw earlier: an apostrophe at the start of the first verse (μηδὲ σύ γ'), followed by a command at the start of the second (ἄχθου), and then an explanation (signaled by γὰρ), which begins after the mid-line caesura. It seems, therefore, that this Hesiodic collection comprised a series of short hexametrical pronouncements, all framed as the discrete bits of advice that Chiron once gave to Achilles, for example, to give due honor to the gods and his parents, but perhaps also advice on more practical things, such as oaths and sacrifice.[33] In this light, it is suggestive that Achilles is also the addressee of Peleus' advice in *Iliad* 9 (discussed above): might the *Iliad* poet have borrowed or adapted these verses directly from some earlier and orally performed predecessor of Hesiodic *Hypothêkai of Chiron*? This borrowing is easy to imagine, because, as was mentioned in the Introduction, the process of embedding a short hexametrical genre into Homeric character speech required a limited amount of effort.

Should we, then, consider *hypothêkê* an independent hexametrical "genre"? That *hypothêkai* could be collected under this rubric suggests as much. And we do know of other lost collections of hexametrical advice by Phocylides of Miletus, Bias of Priene, Demodocus of Leros, and Periander of Corinth, the last of whom allegedly composed a poem of two thousand verses that are called *hypothêkai*.[34] None of the scant surviving fragments of Periander actually display the form of the *hypothêkê* outlined above, although this is an argument

[32] Frag. 162 K-A; see Kurke (1990) 101–2, Hunter (2014) 75–86 passim and Horne (2017) 38–39 for discussion.

[33] West (1978a) 23, who notes that Frag. 6 of the Cyclic Titanomachy asserts that Chiron first taught men oaths, sacrifices, and other things.

[34] West (1978a) 24–25 and (1978b) 164 ("were recited not as isolated apophthegms of two or three lines, but in a connected series as they are later found in books") and 165 ("not hard to imagine . . . a rhapsode giving a recital of Phocylides' collected wisdom in . . . catalogue form").

from silence. West has argued that all of these collections could have been performed as catalogue poems, but a more pertinent question might be whether we can imagine a specific time and setting in ancient Greek life (as we can for an epitaph or a lament) when an older man might address such a battery of advice in hexameters to a younger man. The answer is probably negative, although such a performance may be reflected in the string of admonitions that Pindar addresses to a king in the last strophe of his first *Pythian Ode* or in the piling up of precepts, separated only by asyndeton, in Isocrates' essay of advice to Nicocles of Salamis (*Or.* 2).[35] Certainly there are some instances in other cultures for such performances, for example, when a young man is given his adult name or is going off on an important journey.[36] We shall see below in Section 2.3 that the author of the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer* could indeed imagine his "Homer" extemporizing—for his goatherd host and in the privacy of his hut—a perfectly crafted *hypothêkê* about the proper feeding of guard dogs.[37]

2.2 Hexametrical *Epithalamia*

Three ancient poets provide neglected evidence for Greek wedding poems composed in hexameters: Sappho, in a scant handful of fragments; Theocritus in *Idyll* 18, a mimetic poem, which embeds a fifty-verse performance by Helen's girlfriends at the door of her wedding chamber; and Catullus in *Carmen* 62, another mimetic wedding poem in hexameters.[38] The two later poems are usually thought, for the reasons outlined earlier, to reflect earlier Greek wedding songs composed in lyric or choral meters. This is a cogent approach, but one that does not ask the puzzling—and perhaps most important—question: why did Sappho, herself a lyric poet extraordinaire, compose some of her wedding poems in hexameters, a meter that she hardly uses elsewhere? I shall suggest, in fact, that Sappho was guided by some kind of generic constraint, namely that the Greeks traditionally performed at least one kind of wedding poem in dactylic hexameters.

[35] West (1978a) 24.

[36] West (1981a) 60–61 notes some rare instances among the Finno-Ugric peoples and in Africa, for example, at a wedding, at a young man's naming ceremony, or when he is setting out for a journey. The last named situation corresponds fairly well with the circumstances in which, according to Phoenix, Peleus uttered his *hypothêkê* to Achilles.

[37] *Life* 21 (= Epigram 11); see Section 5.4 below for discussion.

[38] This section is an abbreviated version of Faraone (2020a), which treats all of the "wedding" fragments of Sappho and provides a much more lengthy and detailed reading of the poems of Theocritus and Catullus.

This insight, in turn, leaves open the possibility, explored below, that when Theocritus and Catullus—both avid readers of Sappho[39]—use hexameters in their wedding poems, they are imitating both the content and the form of this neglected genre. This is, to be sure, a circular argument of sorts, but one familiar to scholars seeking to make sense of the earliest fragments of ancient Greek poetry. One long-standing impediment to this approach is the tendency of editors and commentators to lump together Sappho's hexametrical and non-hexametrical fragments into a general category of "wedding songs," a practice that ignores, of course, the two most important hallmarks of ancient Greek genre that were mentioned earlier: the meter in which it was composed and the social context, real or fictive, in which it was performed. In what follows, then, I shall first argue against a single genre of Sapphic "wedding songs" by looking closely at the hexametrical fragments and at the earliest descriptions of wedding performances in Homeric, Hesiodic, and Pindaric poetry. I do so in order to describe two important sub-genres: a public and non-hexametrical one, performed with music by singers of both genders in a procession to the couple's new home, and a more private and hexametrical one performed by a stationary group of young maidens before the wedding chamber. I shall then argue that *Idyll* 18 and the final stanzas of Catullus' *Carmen* 62 provide additional evidence for this hexametrical genre.

The fragments of Sappho's wedding poems can be divided roughly in half: six composed in dactylic hexameters (104–9) and eight in various non-hexametrical meters (110–17). As Page acknowledged long ago, the hexametrical fragments are, in fact, quite different from the rest.[40] One short fragment addresses Hesperus, an invocation that points to a performance in the evening (Frag. 104):[41]

> Ἔσπερε πάντα φέρων ὅσα φαίνολις ἐσκέδασ᾽ αὔως,
> †φέρεις ὄιν, φέρεις† αἶγα, φέρεις ἄπυ μάτερι παῖδα.

[39] E.g., Schadewalt (1950) 46–48; Bowra (1961) 219; Davison (1968) 242; and more recently Feeney (2013) 2–3.

[40] Page (1955) 121–22. See also Fedeli (1983) 10; Courtney (1985) 85; and Contiades-Tsitsoni (1990) 94–97. Two additional hexametrical fragments of Sappho—142 (Λάτω καὶ Νιόβα μάλα μὲν φίλαι ἦσαν ἔταιροι) and 143 (a single verse about chickpeas)—are sometimes added to this category, but they are not cited by Athenaeus as coming from a wedding context. But even if they were from such a poem, they have little to tell us about the genre, because they are so short. Ferrari's contrary assertion (2010) 118–19, however, that they come from a narrative poem is on equally weak footing, because the references to Leto and Niobe might belong to some comparison to the friendship between the bride and her age-mates.

[41] For the fragments of Sappho I use the L-P numbers throughout, but the text and translation of Campbell (1982). I follow most editors in assuming that the second verse is hexametrical; Voigt (1971) ad loc. expresses reservations and Ferrari (2010) 120–21 prints the text without daggers.

Hesperus, bringing everything that shining Dawn scattered,
you bring the sheep, you bring the goat, you bring the child back to its mother.

In quoting this couplet, Demetrius of Halicarnassus comments on Sappho's "charming use of repetition," and indeed, we shall see below that such repetitions were generic to a hexametrical wedding poem. The fragment quoted above most likely continued on, as Page suggests, to assert that in spite of the natural pattern established by the sheep and goat, the bride in question will never return to her parents' home now that she is married.[42] Two other Sapphic fragments in dactylic hexameters (105a and c) seem to belong to the same poem or genre and they both take the form of long and intricate similes, the first of which seems to equate the bride with an apple that is difficult to reach:[43]

οἷον τὸ γλυκύμαλον ἐρεύθεται ἄκρῳ ἐπ᾽ ὔσδῳ,
ἄκρον ἐπ᾽ ἀκροτάτῳ, λελάθοντο δὲ μαλοδρόπηες·
οὐ μὰν ἐκλελάθοντ᾽, ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ ἐδύναντ᾽ ἐπίκεσθαι.

As the sweet-apple reddens on the bough-top,
on the top of the topmost bough; the apple-gatherers have forgotten it
—no they have not forgotten it entirely, but they could not reach it.

Here, in the triple use of the stem ἄκρο- and in the doubling of the verbs λελάθοντο and ἐκλελάθοντ᾽, we see once again the charming repetition flagged by Demetrius. The second simile in dactylic hexameters is not credited by the ancients to Sappho, but it is in her dialect and scholars since Bergk have assumed that it, too, is Sapphic (105c):[44]

οἷαν τὰν ὐάκινθον ἐν ὤρεσι ποίμενες ἄνδρες
πόσσι καταστείβοισι, χάμαι δέ τε πόρφυρον ἄνθος. . . .

Like the hyacinth in the mountains which shepherds
tread underfoot, and on the ground the purple flower. . . .

It has long been noted, of course, that such similes were an integral part of Sappho's wedding poetry,[45] but we must push further and ask this

[42] Page (1955) 121 n. 1 and Courtney (1985) 87. There is, in fact, a similar sentiment in Catullus *Carmen* 62, where the chorus of girls invoke Hesperus and complain in hexameters that his appearance signals the imminent separation of mother and daughter (20–24): "Hesperus, what more cruel fire than thine moves in the sky? For you can endure to pluck the daughter from her mother's arms . . . and give the chaste maiden to the burning youth" (*Hespere, qui caelo fertur crudelior ignis? qui natam possis complexu avellere matris, . . . et iuveni ardenti castam donare puellam*?). The text and translation of Catullus used here are by Cornish, as revised by Goold in Cornish et al. (1962). For discussion of these lines, see Commager (1983) 24–25 and 28.

[43] Griffith (1989) gives a detailed analysis, stressing the idea that the apple is compared to the bride and that praise of the bride is the paramount goal.

[44] See Davison (1968) 244 and the close reading of Griffith (1989) 56.

[45] Hague (1983); Fedeli (1983) 11; Swift (2010) 245–46; and Feeney (2013).

question: why do all but one of the hexametrical fragments focus on the bride alone?

This close attention to the bride was dictated, I suggest, by the context in which these hexameters were performed. Our earliest evidence for Greek weddings suggests that we can, in fact, distinguish two types of performances, if we focus on the gender of the performers and the place and timing of the performance:[46]

Processional Song with musical instruments sung in non-hexametrical meters by both men and women, as they with torches accompany the bride and groom to their new home;

Stationary Song without musical accompaniment chanted in dactylic hexameters by a small group of young women before the door of the wedding chamber.

Our earliest evidence describes both of these types as a *hymenaios*, a cletic hymn to the wedding god Hymen that calls upon him to be present and give his blessings to the new couple. We shall see, however, that our sources also use the term *epithalamium* to describe the second type, a name that can easily be explained by its etymology as a song sung at (*epi-*) the wedding chamber (*thalamos*); by the late Hellenistic period, however, this second term also begins to be used, like *hymenaios*, as a general term for wedding song.[47]

The most ancient descriptions of the *hymenaios* suggest, in fact, that it was sung originally or primarily in a procession. In the city at peace depicted on Achilles' shield, for example, we see in the wedding scene a plurality of brides led from their homes through the city with blazing torches while "the loud ὑμέναιος rose up" (*Iliad* 18.490–96); in this passage, young men whirl in the dance as flutes and lyres play continually, and women stand at the doors of their homes and marvel.[48] The Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles* stages a more elaborate scene: a single bride is led to her husband in a well-wheeled wagon, as

[46] This passage summarizes the discussion of Fedeli (1983) 7–10, which follows and strengthens the analysis of Muth (1954).

[47] The term *epithalamion* appears in Greek for the first time in the fourth century BCE; see Wheeler (1930) 207. The popular notion that the library at Alexandria had a book of Sappho's poems labeled *Epithalamia* is still debated: Yatromanolakis (1999) and Dale (2011), but see Battezzato (2018) 12–13 for a recent counterargument.

[48] For discussion, see Richardson (2011b) 21, who remarks that the scene appears to be closer to the world of the poet's own time than that of the main narrative of the *Iliad*.

"the loud ὑμέναιος rose up" (273–80). Here, once again in a blaze of torches, two "playful choruses" (χοροὶ παίζοντες) follow the cart, one of men singing to the accompaniment of panpipes and the other of women singing to the lyre.[49] The composite picture of these two early scenes is one of choruses singing publicly to the sound of musical instruments in torchlit processions, with hints of some important distinctions according to gender: the women either do not sing at all or do so to the lyre, instead of the pipes.[50] Unfortunately, neither the Homeric nor the Hesiodic poet describes or quotes the content of these processional songs, of which we may get our first glimpse in some of the non-hexametrical fragments of Sappho that invoke Hymen, for example (Frag. 111):

> ὔψοι δὴ τὸ μέλαθρον, ὐμήναον,
> ἀέρρετε, τέκτονες ἄνδρες, ὐμήναον.
> γάμβρος †(εἰσ)έρχεται ἶσος† Ἄρευι,
> ἄνδρος μεγάλω πόλυ μέσδων.
>
> On high the roof, Hymenaeus,
> raise up, you carpenters, Hymenaeus!
> The bridegroom is coming in, the equal of Ares,
> much larger than a large man.

The text and meter here are both uncertain, but editors usually assume that it was sung when the bridal procession arrived at the groom's house.[51] And like the imagined song of the "playful" choruses on the Hesiodic shield, the overblown praise of the groom's body is probably designed to be comic abuse, as Demetrius notes, when he reprimands Sappho for "making rather cheap fun of the rustic bridegroom . . . using prosaic rather than poetic language."[52] He then quotes another lyric fragment of Sappho's (110a), which modern editors usually connect with Frag. 111: "The door-keeper's feet are seven fathoms long and his sandals are made from five ox-hides; ten cobblers worked hard to make them."[53]

Without pressing too hard on the details, it would seem that one of the earliest types of ancient Greek *hymenaioi* was the processional—a unison

[49] Richardson (2011b) 21–22 notes that "this seems to be the first example in hexameter poetry of male and female choirs together."

[50] Contiades-Tsitsoni (1990) 42–45.

[51] Page (1955) 120–21. See Page (1955) 124 and Campbell (1967) 284 for the uncertainty of the text and meter. The fragment is quoted by Hephaestion, who omits the final line, and by Demetrius, who omits the two invocations of Hymenaeus.

[52] Demetrius, *On Style* 167, with Marcovich (1972) 29–32.

[53] Page (1955) 120–22. The "doorkeeper" (θυρώρος) is not a common servant, but rather a friend of the groom, who will guard the door of the wedding chamber throughout the night. See Photios 3.42, with the discussion of Oakley and Sinos (1993) 37.

song performed loudly with musical instruments, addressed primarily to the groom—sometimes with playful content and sometimes with the performers separated by gender.[54] This procession, of course, delivers the bride to her new home, but the Homeric and Hesiodic descriptions never mention the groom in motion, even though the earliest depictions of the procession on Attic black-figure vases always show both bride and groom in the same chariot or cart.[55] The existence of this processional genre is confirmed, of course, by Pindar, who makes numerous allusions to such songs, and by the many adaptations of them in the choral poetry of Attic drama, which are all sung to musical instruments and often, albeit not always, in a procession that leads the new couple off stage.[56] And like the vase paintings, these dramatic scenes suggest that the groom processes with the bride.[57] There are, however, two important exceptions to this general pattern of the processional *hymenaios*: in the *Prometheus Bound* the verb ὑμεναιοῦν describes a variety of compositions, including some performed "over the wedding bed" and others "over the nuptial baths," suggesting that the category of the *hymenaios* must have also included stationary performances.[58] In the case of *hymenaios* and related words, therefore, it seems best to agree with Dunbar that the word serves both as a genus ("wedding song") and as a species of that genus ("processional-song at a wedding").[59]

[54] By "ribald," I do not necessarily mean "obscene," a popular idea in the 1960s that was effectively demolished by Marcovich (1972) 29–32. Dale (2011) 51–58 suggests that these fragments were seen as "iambic" by ancient critics.

[55] Oakley and Sinos (1993) 26–34.

[56] Stern (1978) 31. Because in tragedy they are always performed in anticipation of an imminent (but usually unconsummated) wedding, it is only natural that they imitate *hymenaioi* in their lyric form and especially in the echoing word *hymenaios* at verse-end, as we saw above in the first two lines of Sappho 111. Gow (1950) 2.361 lists eleven examples in Greek and Latin. In comedy, on the other hand, these songs are often linked to the final *exodos*, during which the chorus in procession escort the comic hero and his new bride off stage, presumably to their new home. Dunbar (1995) 750–55 notes that two plays of Aristophanes—*Birds* and *Peace*—end with an *exodos* that also serves as a "wedding processional song" for the comic hero, who is about to take his bride home for the first time. These songs all have short strophes that repeat the word *hymenaios* at the end of the line and in the accusative case, just as Sappho does.

[57] There is some limited evidence that the groom waited for her in the bridal chamber, e.g., Xenophon of Ephesus 1.8.1–3 and Euripides, *Cyclops* 203 with the discussion of Oakley and Sinos (1993) 27–28.

[58] *Prometheus Bound* 555 ff. See Muth (1954) 34; Fedeli (1983) 8; and Contiades-Tsitsoni (1990) 32. In her helpful charts of "poesia nuziale greca," Lyghounis (1991) 175–79 includes songs sung at the wedding feast, usually by a single and professional singer, e.g., *Il.* 24.62–63, *Od.* 4.3–19, but it is not clear to me how, at least in the epic evidence, we can formally distinguish between a special "wedding song" sung at a dinner and a typical Homeric type-scene of dinner-time entertainment. Unfortunately none of the pre-Roman evidence describes or preserves the content of these songs.

[59] Dunbar (1995) 755.

Pindar, in fact, provides us the best early evidence for a stationary *hymenaios*, when he describes Coronis' lustful and ultimately tragic impatience (*Pyth*. 3.16–19):

> οὐκ ἔμειν᾽ ἐλθεῖν τράπεζαν νυμφίαν,
> οὐδὲ παμφώνων ἰαχὰν ὑμεναίων, ἅλικες
> οἷα παρθένοι φιλέοισιν ἑταῖραι
> ἑσπερίαις ὑποκουρίζεσθ᾽ ἀοιδαῖς·
>
> But she could not wait for the marriage feast to come
> nor the sound of the full-voiced *hymenaioi*,
> the sort that her maiden companions, girls of her own age,
> delight in serenading with twilight songs.

Here Pindar devotes three lines to a composition that the bride's girlfriends perform in unison as evening falls,[60] and in so doing, he uses a somewhat rare verb, ὑποκουρίζεσθαι, which generally refers to childish talk or the use of diminutives and endearing names.[61] This evening performance of the bride's age-mates (ἅλικες) does not take place, of course, in a public procession, but rather it seems to be a private and very personal one that excludes men as performers. I suggest, moreover, that the absence of music instruments is also important here, because Pindar seems to describe a kind of improvised performance by young girls, age-mates of the bride, who in part call on her by her pet names and refer to their youth spent together.

The only extant performance in Greek literature that fits Pindar's description is, in fact, the one framed and enacted in Theocritus' *Idyll* 18, a mimetic poem staged in hexameters before the *thalamos* of Helen and Menelaus. And it is presumably because of this location and because the performance mainly invokes the bride that his ancient editors gave it the title *Epithalamium for Helen*. Theocritus begins his poem with eight verses that describe the twelve Spartan maidens, who "established themselves as a chorus before the newly painted bridal chamber" (3: πρόσθε νεογράπτω θαλάμω χορὸν ἐστάσαντο) and sang in unison, "while stamping time with forceful steps" (7–8: ἐγκροτέοισαι/ ποσσὶ περιπλίκτοις).[62] It is sometimes argued or assumed

[60] Young (1968) 34–35: "Pindar attributes unusual importance to the lack of song in the union of Coronis and her lover, for he devotes three full verses to describing the songs and joys which accompany them, while summing up the whole marriage banquet itself and the ceremony in just two words: τράπεζαν νυμφίαν."

[61] LSJ loc. cit. translate the Pindaric phrase as "serenades sung by girls on the evening of a friend's marriage." The verb is a dialect form of ὑποκορίζεσθαι, for which see again LSJ, who among other definitions give "to coax or sooth with soft names," for example, of lovers, citing Aristophanes, *Wealth* 1011: "he used to call me coaxingly (ὑποκορίζετο) his little duck and little dove."

[62] The MSS are split between περιπλέκτοις, favored by Chomeley ("woven") and Gow ("weaving"), presumably because they assume that Theocritus is mimicking a choral model, and περιπλίκτοις

that in the fifty lines that follow Theocritus imitates some kind of choral "wedding song," in which the maidens danced and sang like a trained chorus,[63] and there is some support for this interpretation. Theocritus, for example, calls the girls a "chorus" (3) and says that "all of them at the same time sang to a single tune" (7–8: ἄειδον δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι ἐς ἓν μέλος). The scholia, moreover, report that "some things (τινα)" in *Idyll* 18 were taken from the first book of Stesichorus' long choral poem, *Helen*.[64] Richard Hunter has also suggested that the embedded performance in *Idyll* 18 was itself composed as five discrete stanzas or strophes, each ten verses long, and as such probably mimics some choral or monodic model.[65] And finally, when Theocritus describes the palace echoing with the sound of the *hymenaios* (8: ὑπὸ δ' ἴαχε δῶμ' ὑμεναίῳ) and when he ends the girls' song with "Hymen, O Hymenaeus" (59: Ὑμὴν ὦ Ὑμέναιε),[66] does he not recall the Hymen refrains found in the other types of non-hexametrical wedding poems?

There are, in fact, significant problems with this traditional approach. First and foremost, it is entirely unclear from the scholia precisely how many "things" were borrowed from the first book of Stesichorus' *Helen*, a long narrative poem of which only two short fragments survive, one of three verses describing how the chariot of Menelaus and Helen was pelted with fruit, leaves, and garlands and the second a two-word description of a lead foot bath.[67] Such a narrative poem probably did include a brief description of the *epithalamium*, much like the serenade described in Pindar's ode, but the latter is, of course, a much better source, because it survives complete and has several parallels with Theocritus' mimetic poem: (i) it uses the word *hymenaios* in the wider sense of any performance at a wedding; (ii)

("forceful"), favored by Pearson, Heyne, and Wilamowitz, the last of whom says it is an allusion to the masculine stride of Spartan women; see the detailed note of Gow (1950) ad loc. I would add that by translating ἐγκροτέοισαι simply as "dancing" (Gow) also misses the rather vehement sense of the stem ("to strike, beat, hammer," etc.). Euripides, for example, uses ἐγκροτέω to describe a fistfight (*IT* 1368).

[63] See previous note.

[64] Stesichorus Frag. 189, with Stern (1978) 30 n. 5; Fedeli (1983) 14; and Hunter (1996a) 151–53. Gow (1950) 2.348–49 was closer to the mark, I suggest, when he says that "it is not unlikely that, whatever details Theocritus might have borrowed from Stesichorus in his handling of the nuptials of Helen, he owes a larger general debt to Sappho."

[65] Hunter (1996a) 155–57, who discusses several older proposals by Ahrens, Wilamowitz, and Cairns for dividing the embedded poem into stanzas or verse paragraphs: none of which resulted, however, in stanzas of equal length.

[66] Mangelsdorff (1913) 11, for example, thinks, that it refers to the last line of the embedded poem, whereas Wasdin (2018) 93 thinks it refers to the entire poem.

[67] Stesichorus Frag. 187–88. The other three fragments are a notice in the Theocritean scholia (Frag. 189) and two descriptions of the oath of Helen's suitors (190–91).

it identifies the performers as the age-mates of the bride; (iii) and it makes no mention of musical instruments, despite Pindar's use, like Theocritus, of the language of song (ἐσπερίαις ὑποκουρίζεσθ᾽ ἀοιδαῖς). There is, then, no obvious reason why the lyric *form* of Stesichorus' narrative poem must have influenced Theocritus' presentation of the hexametrical stanzas in *Idyll* 18, and if he borrowed, as seems likely, some of the details of his description, the result was simply that the maidens' performance was described or presented in a way that was similar to Theocritus' presentation of the scene.[68] We should also recall that, although the intended audience for the girls' performance was the married couple listening on the other side of the closed door, Pindar suggests that it consisted of "girl talk" addressed primarily to the bride, a fact that is also true for all but one of Sappho's hexametrical wedding fragments and also of *Idyll* 18. Why, then, should we imagine an elaborate choral song and dance? As was suggested earlier, the traditional search for a choral model is based insecurely on the assumption that, since his corpus is primarily hexametrical, Theocritus did not intend for the hexametrical *form* of the embedded performance in *Idyll* 18 to be part of the mimetic enterprise. But, as we shall see in Section 5.4 below, this is precisely what Theocritus does in *Idyll* 2, when he chooses the hexametrical incantation as his model for the first third of another long mimetic poem, which is likewise divided into regular stanzas.[69]

I have closely analyzed each of the ten-verse stanzas elsewhere and have shown how they give us additional insights (summarized below) into the content of *Idyll* 18 and aim primarily at praising the bride:[70]

	Addressee/Focus	**Syntax/Tone**	**Content**
Stanza 1	both groom and bride	gentle teasing	groom drunk or asleep; bride should stay with her playmates
Stanza 2	bride alone	comparison with her age-mates (imperfect tense)	reminiscences of their past life with Helen

[68] Hunter (2015) 152–58 offers a thoughtful and thorough study of the influence that Stesichorus' *Helen* might have had on *Idyll* 18, which he sees as rather muted, concluding along the lines of Gow (see above note 64) that "the most familiar fact about the style of *Idyll* 18 is the richness of its Sapphic colour, in both specific allusion and overall texture."

[69] See also Faraone (2021).

[70] See (2020a) 330–34.

	Addressee/Focus	Syntax/Tone	Content
Stanza 3	bride alone	comparison with Spartan wives (present tense)	her talent in spinning, weaving wool, and playing the lyre
Stanza 4	themselves	ritual vow (future tense)	ceremony at the tree performed by maidens
Stanza 5	both groom and bride	blessings (optative)	wishes for children, mutual love, and wealth

The maidens, therefore, after teasing the groom in the initial stanza, spend most of their time praising Helen, by using lengthy similes and comparing her to themselves or the other wives of Sparta. They also name Helen six times, twice in each of the three central stanzas, whereas Menelaus is named only once in the first. This central focus on the bride was, as we saw, implied in the Pindaric passage quoted earlier, where the evening serenade was performed primarily for the bride. *Idyll* 18 is not, of course, a "real" *epithalamium*, but rather a mimetic poem in which Theocritus uses, I suggest, a familiar generic form in order to contrast, among other things, the girlish naiveté of the internal performers with the unhappy future of Helen and Menelaus.[71]

It seems, moreover, that throughout the Hellenistic period dactylic hexameters were a regular medium for bona fide *epithalamia* in Greek, although few have survived,[72] and that they were quickly adapted by the Romans to Latin verse.[73] But among the surviving wedding poems in hexameters, only Catullus' *Carmen* 62 clearly reflects, as his poems often do, the Greek tradition under discussion, especially near the end of the poem in

[71] See, e.g., Stern (1978) and Pantelia (1995).

[72] See Pfeiffer at Callimachus Frag. 392 and Wasdin (2018) 18–19, who note the survival of a number of tiny fragments from the *epithalamia* of Eratosthenes and two female poets—Nossis and Anyte, the latter known to have imitated Sappho. The only sizable fragment, perhaps, is a single hexameter from a poem that Callimachus might have composed for the wedding of Ptolemy and Arsinoe in 275/4 BCE (Frag. 392 Pf.): Ἀρσινόης, ὦ ξεῖνε, γάμον καταβάλλομ᾽ ἀείδειν ("I begin, O guest-friend, to sing of the wedding of Arsinoë!"), which some assume to be an *epithalamium*, but, because the verse clearly imitates the initial line of a Homeric hymn, Callimachus must be indulging in his hallmark mixing of genres; see Pfeiffer ad loc.

[73] The Latin tradition was subsequently influenced heavily by Statius, who in a famous *epithalamium* written for a real wedding in the first century CE (*Silvae* 1.2) revolutionized the genre in various ways that show a clear break with his Greek model. See Pavlovskis (1965) and especially Roberts (1989), who stresses Statius' innovative use of long mythological vignettes.

the balanced set of ten-verse stanzas, each of which begins with long similes that assimilate the bride to a flower or a vine:[74]

> ut flos in saeptis secretus nascitur hortis,
> ignotus pecori, nullo convulsus aratro,
> quem mulcent aurae, firmat sol, educat imber . . . (40–43)
>
> As a flower springs up secretly in a fenced garden, unknown to the cattle, torn up by no plough, which the winds caress, the sun strengthens, the shower draws forth . . .
>
> ut vidua in nudo vitis quae nascitur arvo
> numquam se extollit, numquam mitem educat uvam
> sed tenerum prono deflectens pondere corpus. . . . (49–51)
>
> As an unwedded vine which grows up in a bare field never raises itself aloft, never brings forth a mellow grape, but bending its tender form with downward weight. . . .

Scholars have noticed how Catullus, in both similes, imitates the Sapphic examples discussed earlier, when he begins each stanza with the word *ut*, by which he recalls Sappho's use of οἷος at the beginning of her similes about the apple and the hyacinth (οἷον τὸ γλυκύμαλον and οἵαν τὰν ὐάκινθον).[75] And it is not without interest that Theocritus also places at the very start of his third ten-verse stanza a pair of similes that likewise focus on the bride: "Just as a tall cypress rises high, an adornment for a fertile field or garden, or as a Thracian horse is an adornment for a chariot, so too is rosy-skinned Helen." But why does Catullus imitate the length and form of the Sapphic similes, as well as the hexametric meter and stanzas of *Idyll* 18? He does so, I suggest, as homage to both Sappho and Theocritus, but in the process he also reveals that both of these poets are working in a traditional Greek genre, whose hallmarks included stanzas, similes, and dactylic hexameters. We have no evidence, of course, that Sappho composed her *epithalamium* for a real wedding and there is no reason to insist upon this point, but two later Greek texts suggest, in fact, that a hexametrical poem of this type was indeed chanted before the bedroom door in the Roman period: a parody by Lucian composed in elegiac couplets and a small papyrus chit inscribed with eight hexameters

[74] The text and translation of Catullus used here are by Cornish, as revised by Goold in Cornish et al. (1962). For discussion of the full ten-verse stanzas, see Commager (1983) 24–25 and 28 and Faraone (2020a) 341–44.

[75] See, e.g., Gerber (1970) 177 and Courtney (1985) 86, who stresses the important parallels between Catullus' use and placement of *ut* and Sappho's similar placement of οἷος.

that contain blessings similar to those in the final stanza of *Idyll* 18 and that seem to be a prompt to remind a group of Greek women in Roman Egypt what to chant as they performed their own version of the *epithalamium* before the wedding-chamber doors.[76]

2.3 Varieties of Performance in the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer*

The survey of "useful" hexametrical poems in Aristophanes' *Frogs* suggested that Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer were specialists who mastered one or two hexametrical genres, although most scholars would nowadays agree that these monikers stand in for long-standing oral traditions, in which many individual poets participated over time.[77] But, as we noticed earlier, the mostly lost poetry of Orpheus and Musaeus shows a variety of genres—rituals, cures, and oracles—that were different in their short length and ritual contexts from the surviving poems of Homer and Hesiod. But we have another, perhaps even better source for the versatility of early hexametrical performers in the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer*, which was, at least in its transmitted form, composed, perhaps with parodic intent, in the Imperial Period, but which seems to have been drawn from the work of a much earlier, sophistic author, who was a contemporary of Plato.[78] The *Life* is of no biographical value, of course, but it does embed into its narrative frame a number of short hexametrical poems, which date to the late-archaic or classical period.[79] And, as a learned exercise in

[76] See Faraone (2020a) 341–44 for full quotation and detailed discussion of both stanzas.

[77] For the most recent summary, see Gainsford (2015) vi–x.

[78] This is the assessment of West (2003) 304, but see, e.g., Lefkowitz (1981) 20–21 ("[Pseudo-] Herodotus can tell us what fourth-century Greeks understood about the genre"); Graziosi (2002) 73–74 ("it should be dated to the Hellenistic period"); Häag (2012) 135 ("it [i.e., our present text] must have followed rather closely a *Life* written in the Classical period"); and Bryant Kirkland (2018) 303–4, who sums up the consensus for a date in the "Hellenistic and/or Imperial eras for the text's composition, while acknowledging that it likely channels earlier layers of material" and who revives the suspicion of Latacz (1999) 28 and others that the final version was poking fun at the traditional form of a poet's *Life*.

[79] See, e.g., Markwald (1986); West (2003) 300–305; Beecroft (2010) 70–72; and most recently Häag (2012) 135: "These epigrams can be shown on linguistic and other grounds to be post-Homeric, but also pre-Hellenistic, perhaps as early as the seventh or sixth century. Since many are firmly integrated into the respective episodes of the *Life* and would make little sense without the precise biographical context, it follows that the narrative core of the episodes must be ancient, too."

pseudepigraphy aiming at verisimilitude, it presumably gives us a series of "realistic" snapshots of a hexametrical poet traveling among the coastal cities of Ionia and the nearby islands and making his livelihood primarily by "speaking" or "uttering" his "verses"[80] usually without musical accompaniment and performing an eclectic variety of genres, including an oracle, a *hypothêkê*, and an incantation.[81] Nearly all of his compositions share the same characteristics: they are short, are extemporized on the spot, have a clearly defined ritual setting, and "are frequently about everyday life."[82] They are, moreover, performed in a series of non-aristocratic or festival venues.[83] In Neoteichos, for example, "Homer" composes poems in a cobbler's shop or under a poplar tree (*Life* 9–10), and later he moves on to Cyme and Phocaea, where he gives performances while sitting in *leschai*, a word that could mean low-life places like "saloons" or more upscale ones like "public halls."[84] Finally he ends up on Samos, singing for potters near an outdoor kiln (32) and, at each new moon, begging at the doors of the "most well favored houses" (33).

The hexametrical genres he performs are as varied as the venues, but they are framed by a pair of "begging songs." He "recites" (εἰπεῖν) the first one, which begins,[85] αἰδεῖσθε ξενίων κεχρημένον ἠδὲ δόμοιο,/ οἵ πόλιν αἰπεινὴν νύμφης ἐριώπιδος Ἥρης/ ναίετε ("Have respect for one in need of hospitality and house, you that dwell in the steep city of fair-eyed Hera the Bride . . ."). According to the *Life*, this poem was a success. So was the very different one that he performs with children on Samos near the end of the *Life*,[86] a poem that can perhaps aptly be labeled a "song," because this is one of two places in the *Life* where "Homer" is explicitly said to be "singing" (ἀείδων), although there is never any indication that he accompanies himself with music. This second performance is called the "Eiresiônê," after the wool-wrapped stick

[80] "Homer" is most often described as "speaking the following verses" (εἰπεῖν/λέγειν τὰ ἔπεα τάδε) in the introductions to *Epigrams* 1–2, 4–6, 11–13, and 16 and he "utters" (φθέγγεσθαι) three others (*Epigrams* 7, 8, and 10). But only in introducing *Epigrams* 14 (the long blessing and curse for the potters) and 15 (the *eiresiônê*), both sung on Samos, do we find the vocabulary of "singing" (ἀείδειν).

[81] Nagy (2010) 29–42 also notes the value of the *Lives* for assessing Homeric performances.

[82] Beecroft (2010) 72.

[83] Kirk (1962) 274–81 without mention of the *Life*, but drawing from the internal evidence of the Homeric poems, especially the *Odyssey*, describes a similar variety of venues, a discussion that Thalmann (1984) 119 deftly summarizes as "houses, taverns or marketplaces."

[84] *Life* 12 (Cyme) and 15 (Phocaea). West translates it as "saloons" in both places, but in Cyme it is called more specifically "the *leschai* of the *gerontes*," which means either "the hangouts of the old men" or "the halls of the elders."

[85] *Life* 9 = *Epigram* 1. I use the text and translation of the "Life" (and all of its embedded poems) in West (2003).

[86] *Life* 33 = *Epigram* 15.

that he and the children carry, and it is sung at the new moon during a festival in honor of Apollo. It consists of nine hexameters, followed by a coda of three iambic trimeters:[87]

δῶμα προσετραπόμεσθ᾽ ἀνδρὸς μέγα δυναμένοιο,
ὃς μέγα μὲν δύναται, μέγα δὲ βρέμει, ὄλβιος αἰεί.
αὐταὶ ἀνακλίνεσθε, θύραι· Πλοῦτος γὰρ ἔσεισιν
πολλός, σὺν Πλούτωι δὲ καὶ Εὐφροσύνη τεθαλυῖα
Εἰρήνη τ᾽ ἀγαθή. ὅσα δ᾽ ἄγγεα, μεστὰ μὲν εἴη,
κυρβα<σ>ίη δ᾽ αἰεὶ μάζης κατὰ καρδόπου ἔρποι.
νῦν μὲν κριθαίην εὐώπιδα σησαμόεσσαν . . .
νεῦμαί τοι νεῦμαι ἐνιαύσιος ὥστε χελιδών·
ἕστηκ᾽ ἐν προθύροις ψιλὴ πόδας· ἀλλὰ φέρ᾽ αἶψα.

<ὑ>πέρ σε τὠπόλλωνος, <ὦ> γύ<ν>αι τι δός.
κεἰ μέν τι δώσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐχ ἑστήξομεν,
οὐ γὰρ συνοικήσοντες ἐνθάδ᾽ ἤλθομεν.

We turn ourselves to the house of a man of great means,
who has great resources and makes a great noise, ever prosperous.
Open of your own accord, doors, for Wealth will enter
in plenty, and with Wealth, flourishing Cheer
and welcome Peace. However many are the grain jars, may they be full,
and may a mound of dough always move atop the kneading-trough.
Now [give us] beautiful barley meal laced with sesame . . .
I'll return, I'll return each year, like the swallow.
I stand at the porch, feet stripped, so bring something quickly.

For Apollo's sake, lady, give us something! If you will, well and good: if not,
we won't wait about, we didn't come here to make our homes with you.

We are told, moreover, that for a long time afterwards "these hexametrical verses were *sung* (ἤιδετο δὲ τὰ ἔπεα)" by the children, as they went around begging during the feast of Apollo. This is another instance of a hexametrical text performed in unison like the *epithalamia* discussed earlier, in this case, too, without musical instruments.

We need not believe, of course, that "Homer" composed this Samian begging song or, for that matter, that he composed any of the poems preserved in the *Life*, but only that it was plausible to a writer in the late-classical period that a wandering hexametrical poet could have composed such a ritual song in the archaic period. In fact, as we know from other sources, in Ionian cities and during a feast of Apollo, begging boys did traditionally carry from house to house the eponymous *eiresiônê*, a branch hung with fruits and

[87] It is not entirely clear which Apolline festival is being described. West (2003) 395 n. 28 describes it as an "autumn ritual," and Burkert (1985) 101 says that at Athens it was performed twice, once in summer at the Thargelia and again in autumn at the Pyanopsia. See the following note for the situation in Athens.

cakes.[88] The text of the hexametrical poem preserved in the *Life* is corrupt in some places, but as we saw, the basic goal of the chant was to persuade the homeowners to give food and then wish that wealth, cheer, and peace may enter their homes.[89] This performance belongs to a Greek genre of the "trick or treat" type that survives in two other stichic meters: a Rhodian version of the so-called "Swallow Song," which begins with twelve verses in an Aeolic-choliambic meter, and the choliambic "Crow Song" composed by Phoenix of Colophon, the latter apparently a literary reflection of these traditional performances.[90] The existence of the hexametrical version is, however, supported by a similar performance in Athens, where according to Plutarch young men again at a festival for Apollo "chanted" (*epaidein*) an *eiresiônê* song in dactylic hexameters, while carrying an olive branch wreathed with wool:[91]

> Εἰρεσιώνη σῦκα φέρει καὶ πίονας ἄρτους
> καὶ μέλι ἐν κοτύλῃ καὶ ἔλαιον ἀποψήσασθαι
> καὶ κύλικ' εὔζωρον, ὡς ἄν μεθύουσα καθεύδῃ.
>
> Eiresiônê brings figs and rich bread,
> and honey in a pot and oil to clean the body,
> and strong wine too in a beaker, that one may go to bed mellow

These three verses are presumably part of a longer composition, because they lack the traditional blessings and requests that we find in the other three versions. Plutarch says that the youths, whom Theseus saved from the Minotaur and brought back to Athens, carried the *eiresiônê* as they "chanted" these hexameters, a narrative suggesting that they were perhaps performing some kind of ritual thanksgiving.[92] The hexametrical versions on Samos and

[88] Burkert (1985) 101, citing the grammarian Pausanias apud Eustathius at *Iliad* 22.495. Parker (2005) 180 and 204–205 points out that the best evidence (including that of the same Pausanias) connect the *eiresiônê* with the Pyanopsia, for which there seems to have been a civic celebration, as well as private ones.

[89] There follow good wishes for abundance of grain, prediction of the arrival of a new daughter-in-law, and a promise that the singers will return "like the swallow" in the following year. For problems in the text, which seems to have lost verses after lines 7 and 13, see Genova (2017) 15–16.

[90] Athenaeus 8.359e–360d, citing the Roman-period historian Theognis of Rhodes, preserves (i) the "Crow Song" by Phoenix of Colophon (*PMG* 848 = Phoenix, Frag. 2 Knox = Genova [2017] F2), which seems to be performed by men carrying an effigy of a crow, which is called "Apollo's child," and (ii) the Rhodian version of the "Swallow Chant" (= Campbell [1993] no. 848 = Genova [2017] F2).

[91] Plutarch *Theseus* 22.6.

[92] It is curious that, although Theseus brought back both youths and maidens from Crete, according to Plutarch only the youths perform the *eiresiônê*, a note suggesting that here, too, the song was performed in the context of a feast of Apollo.

in Athens and the Aeolic version on Rhodes all end, however, with a similar iambic coda that suggests a common tradition.[93]

"Homer" also improvises hexametrical prayers or hymns. For example, after he boards a ship sailing from Phocaea to Erythrae, he "speaks (λέγει) the following verses" (*Life* 17 = *Epigram* 6):

> κλῦθι, Ποσείδαον μεγαλοσθενὲς ἐννοσίγαιε,
> †εὐρυχόρου† μεδέων ἠδὲ ζαθέου Ἑλικῶνος,
> δὸς δ᾽ οὖρον καλὸν καὶ ἀπήμονα νόστον ἀρέσθαι
> ναύταις, οἳ νηὸς πομποὶ ἠδ᾽ ἀρχοὶ ἔασιν.
> δὸς δ᾽ ἐς ὑπωρείην ὑψικρήμνοιο Μίμαντος
> αἰδοίων μ᾽ ἐλθόντα βροτῶν ὁσίων τε κυρῆσαι,
> φῶτά τε τεισαίμην ὃς ἐμὸν νόον ἠπεροπεύσας
> ὠδύσατο Ζῆνα ξένιον ξενίην τε τράπεζαν.
>
> Hearken, Poseidon, powerful earth-shaker,
> ruler of †broad-arena'd† and holy Helicon,
> and grant a fair wind and a safe passage
> to the sailors, who are the ship's escorts and commanders.
> And grant that, when I come to the foot of towering Mimas,
> I find people respectful and righteous;
> and may I punish the man who deceived my mind
> and angered Zeus who protects guests and the guest-table.

This composition, with its high-sounding first verse filled with the god's name and compound epithets, might have served as the start of a short "Homeric" hymn, except that it ends quickly with two practical requests: safe passage for all on the ship, and revenge, which, as the narrator of the *Life* explains, was aimed at a Phocaean man who stole some of "Homer's" poems and "published" them as his own. Regardless of the accuracy of this accusation, this kind of prayer for divine punishment belongs to a genre of ritual curse, called the "prayer for justice" or "prayer for revenge," which is well known from much later prose inscriptions and which do, in fact, often concern themselves with theft.[94]

The two additional prayers composed on Samos also verge on or contain curses.[95] When he first arrives, the blind "Homer" accidently interrupts women sacrificing to the Kourotrophos at the crossroads (i.e., Hecate) and the priestess, apparently displeased because he has stumbled into a ritual

[93] Martin (1992) 24–25 suggests that the Hesiodic poets in *Works and Days* (504 ff.) reflect knowledge of the same tradition as the Rhodian version.

[94] See Versnel (1991 and 2010) and Faraone (2011c).

[95] "Homer" performs two other curses after the city council of the Cyme rejects his request for a subsidy. The first is embedded in the long oracle-like poem that he utters after the negative decision, which curses, but does not name, the councilor who blocked the subsidy (*Epigram* 4.11–12: "Someone of them will realize when he suffers, the one who decided my lot by way of insults!"). The second is reported, but not quoted, as he leaves Cyme "laying a curse on the Cymaeans that no poet of note should be born in the place to glorify the Cymaeans" (*Life* 15).

restricted to women, gruffly sends him away. He, in turn, speaks a four-line curse designed to ruin her love life.[96] A little later he encounters some potters, who promise him payment if he will "sing" (ἀεῖσαι) for them as they are "firing a kiln full of fragile ware." His response combines a conditional blessing and curse—a standard feature at the end of Greek oaths[97]—that are designed to encourage the potters to keep their promise. First, he "sings" (ἀείδει) the blessing (1–6):[98]

> εἰ μὲν δώσετε μισθὸν ἀοιδῆς, ὦ κεραμῆες,
> δεῦρ᾽ ἄγ᾽ Ἀθηναίη, καὶ ὑπέρσχεθε χεῖρα καμίνου,
> εὖ δὲ μελανθεῖεν κότυλοι καὶ πάντα κάναστρα,
> φρυχθῆναί τε καλῶς καὶ τιμῆς ὦνον ἀρέσθαι,
> πολλὰ μὲν εἰν ἀγορῆι πωλεύμενα, πολλὰ δ᾽ ἀγυιαῖς,
> πολλὰ δὲ κερδῆναι, ἡμᾶς δὲ δὴ ὥς σφας ὀνῆσαι.
>
> If you, on the one hand, are going to pay for my song, O potters,
> then come, Athena, and hold your hand over the kiln:
> may the cups turn a fine black, and all the dishes,
> and be thoroughly baked, and earn the price they are worth,
> as they sell in quantity in the market and the streets,
> and make good profits, and benefit me as it does them.

Athena is invoked here, of course, as the patroness of potters.

The conditional curse that follows, on the other hand, is three verses longer and invokes a number of demonic creatures to destroy the pots, if the potters fail to pay (7–14):[99]

> ἢν δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀναιδείην τρεφθέντες ψεύδε᾽ ἄρησθε,
> συγκαλέω δἤπειτα καμίνων δηλητῆρας,
> Σύντριβ᾽ ὁμῶς Σμάραγόν τε καὶ Ἄσβετον ἠδὲ Σαβάκτην
> Ὠμόδαμόν θ᾽, ὃς τῆιδε τέχνηι κακὰ πολλὰ πορίζει·
> †πεῖθε πυραίθουσαν καὶ δώματα, σὺν δὲ κάμινος
> πᾶσα κυκηθείη, κεραμέων μέγα κωκυσάντων.
> ὡς γνάθος ἱππείη βρύκει, βρύκοι δὲ κάμινος,
> πάντ᾽ ἔντοσθ᾽ αὐτῆς κεραμήϊα λεπτὰ ποιοῦσα.
>
> But if, on the other hand, you turn to shamelessness and deceit,
> then I will invoke all the destroyers of kilns,
> Smasher and Crasher, Over-Blaze and Shake-Apart
> and Under-Bake, who does this craft much harm.
> Invade(?) the fire-loggia and the rooms and may the whole kiln
> be in turmoil, while the potters lament loudly.

[96] *Life* 30 = *Epigram* 12: "Hear my prayer, Kourotrophos, and grant that this woman refuse the love and bed of younger men: let her fancy be taken by old men grey at the temples, whose vigor is blunted away, though their hearts still hanker." See Faraone (1999a) 22.

[97] Faraone (2002a), (2006a), and (2012a).

[98] *Life* 32 = *Epigram* 14.

[99] For discussion and earlier bibliography, see Markwald (1986) ad loc.; Watson (1991) 69–74; and Faraone (2001a).

> As a horse's jaw munches, so may the kiln munch,
> grinding up small all of the pots inside.[100]

The scene, of course, reveals the craftiness of this itinerant poet, who knows that potters were a superstitious lot and especially nervous when the kiln was firing.[101] The *similia-similibus* formula in the final couplet is, moreover, typical of those found in Greek curses, for example, those that Theocritus has Simaetha use in his second *Idyll* (lines 30–31 and 32–33):[102]

> ὡς τοῦτον τὸν κηρὸν ἐγὼ σὺν δαίμονι τάκω,
> ὣς τάκοιθ' ὑπ' ἔρωτος ὁ Μύνδιος αὐτίκα Δέλφις.
>
> As I with the goddess's aid melt this wax,
> so may Mindian Delphis melt at once with love
>
> χὠς δινεῖθ' ὅδε ῥόμβος ὁ χάλκεος ἐξ Ἀφροδίτας,
> ὣς τῆνος δινοῖτο ποθ' ἁμετέραισι θύραισιν.
>
> And as this bronze rhombos from Aphrodite whirls,
> so may he be whirled before my door.

It might well be the case, then, that there was a tradition of composing such formula in the compact form of a hexametrical couplet.

Finally, the "Homer" of the *Life* also improvises a short oracle, while resting at a place called "Pine Tree" near Cyme. After he is struck on the head by a pine cone (*Life* 20), he "utters" (φθέγγεται) the following verses (*Epigram* 10):

> ἄλλη τίς σου πεύκη ἀμείνονα καρπὸν ἴησιν
> Ἴδης ἐν κορυφῆισι πολυπτύχου ἠνεμοέσσης,
> ἔνθα σίδηρος Ἄρηος ἐπιχθονίοισι βροτοῖσιν
> ἔσσεται, εὖτ' ἄν μιν Κεβρήνιοι ἄνδρες ἔχωσιν.
>
> Another pine puts forth a better fruit than yours
> on the peaks of Ida with its windy glens,
> where the War-god's iron shall be among mortals
> on earth, whenever it belongs to Kebrenian men.

The future tense at the start of the last line is puzzling, until the narrator explains, "It was at this time that the Cymaeans were preparing to colonize Kebrenia near Mt. Ida and much iron is produced there." As we shall see below in Section 4.1, a number of hexametrical oracles refer in similarly

[100] The curse continues for another ten lines, which invoke Circe and Chiron in a more literary tone and are thought to be a Hellenistic interpolation; see Markwald (1986) 239–43 and Watson (1991) 74 and Faraone (2001c) for discussion of this addition, the textual problem at the start of line 11, and why the conditional mode is abandoned in the last four lines and the poem turns into a vivid imprecation.

[101] See Faraone (2018b) 68–71 and 132–34.

[102] Theocritus appears to have modeled these verses and others in the first half of the poem on traditional hexametrical incantations, for which see Section 5.4 below.

obscure fashion to the site of the new colony and include a "whenever" clause (εὖτ᾽ ἄν), as we see above in the fourth line, to specify precisely when the prediction will come true or when an important action must be taken.

A few of the other poems that "Homer" performs seem to be moral maxims of a "Hesiodic" nature (*Epigrams* 5, 11, and 13), one of which closely approximates the generic form of the *hypothêkê* described earlier in Section 2.2 (*Epigram* 11):

> Γλαῦκε βοτῶν ἐπιόπτα, ἔπος τί τοι ἐν φρεσὶ θήσω·
> πρῶτον μὲν κυσὶ δεῖπνον ἐπ᾽ αὐλείηισι θύρηισιν
> δοῦναι· τὼς γὰρ ἄμεινον· ὃ γὰρ καὶ πρῶτος ἀκούει
> ἀνδρὸς ἐπερχομένου καὶ ἐς ἕρκεα θηρὸς ἰόντος.
>
> Glaucus, overseer of livestock, let me put a saying in your mind:
> first give the dogs their dinner at the yard gates,
> for in this way it is better, because a dog (i.e., at the gate) is also the first
> to hear a man approaching and a beast coming into the stockade.

Here we see the typical apostrophe at the start of the first verse, the command at the start of the third, and two successive explanations introduced by γὰρ.

The great variety of these short "Homeric" compositions suggests, then, that a mendicant poet of slender means would be well versed in many different kinds of short hexametrical genres, several of which are performed in ritual contexts. It has also been noted that this "Homer" travels mainly to Ionian cities situated on the coast of Anatolia (Cyme, Neoteichos, Phocaea, and Erythrae) or on nearby islands (Chios and Samos), places that tally well with the spread of the Homeric dialect and with those places where we have good reason to believe that Homeric epic was still being composed and reperformed down into the fifth century.[103] Again, this is not an argument for historical accuracy, but rather for a general kind of verisimilitude: these were the kinds of short hexametrical poems that someone living in these areas might expect to hear.

2.4 Summary

From these initial soundings, then, we can see that beginning in the archaic period, if not earlier, the Greeks seem to have performed a number of short hexametrical genres in ritual contexts, mostly solo performances, like the epitaph and the *hypothêkê*, but also a few others that were chanted in unison by

[103] Graziosi (2002) 84–85 and West (2011) 20–27.

a group, like the *epithalamium* or the *eiresiônê*, both of which are performed before the door and end with blessings for those within. In some cases, the groundwork was laid by earlier studies and the results are encouraging, but these preliminary soundings remain somewhat inconclusive, because they lack sufficient corroborating evidence or a clearly defined ritual context. In the case of Hector's oral epitaph, for example, the Homeric poet clearly uses and distorts some kind of well-known epitaphic genre, but there is no extant evidence that the Greeks in the archaic period, or in any period, performed an oral version of such an epitaph at the graveside. A different problem appeared in the case of the *hypothêkai*, which likewise have a clear generic form, but lack any secure ritual or ceremonial context for their performance in daily life. We saw, on the other hand, how, by looking at a fully extant mimetic poem of Theocritus, one might from a handful of Sapphic fragments reverse-engineer a lost *epithalamium,* or at least get a fuller sense of its form and content. The *Life of Homer* was, finally, enormously useful in helping us to imagine the range of these lost hexametrical poems and their local contexts. In the chapters that follow, however, we shall focus our inquiry much more tightly on four much better-documented hexametrical genres: the epichoric hymn, the oracle, the incantation, and the lament. Each of the four is a relatively short genre deployed in a ritual setting, for which we have good knowledge about the performers, the physical and social context of the performance, and the audience. The performance context is, as was mentioned earlier and as we shall see repeatedly, crucial to defining each of these genres.

3

The Chryses Episode as an Epichoric Hymn

The best-documented example of a shorter genre of archaic hexametrical poetry is, of course, the so-called Homeric hymn, which is represented in a fairly extensive collection that has come down to us in a manuscript tradition.[1] In addition to having obvious similarities with the diction, formulas, prosody, and so on of epic poetry, these hymns are usually understood to appeal to the same Panhellenic or pan-regional audiences and belong to the same notional category of praise poetry: just as epic recounts and exalts the mighty deeds of heroic men, so, too, the hymn praises the powers or deeds of the gods.[2] These hymns, with a few exceptional passages that will be discussed below in Section 3.4, generally narrate the interactions among the gods alone. There were, however, other kinds of hexametrical hymns in the archaic period that were closely tied to local rituals, such as processions, sacrifices, libations, and so forth, that focused on epichoric deities and that were far more interested in interactions between the gods and men and how good relations might be established between them.[3]

In what follows I frame my discussion around the well-known Chryses episode in the *Iliad*, arguing that a good deal of the first book of the poem—how Agamemnon insults Apollo's priest, how the god responds with the widespread slaughter of the Greeks, and how eventually the god is mollified—was originally composed as a freestanding hexametrical hymn to Apollo designed for performance in the local sanctuary of Apollo Smintheus in the Troad.[4] In the past, some have, in fact, suggested that the Chryses episode constitutes a distinct unit stylistically, especially the first fifty or so lines, where the compressed narrative, short speeches, and rapid changes of scene

[1] See now the essays collected in Faulkner (2011).

[2] Clay (1989). The genre of the hymn has been debated more generally, especially its relationship with prayer; Bremer (1981) equates them, but Pulleyn (1997) 44–47 and Depew (2000) distinguish prayer as a speech-act aimed at requesting some favor from the god, and "hymn" as one aimed at praising and pleasing the deity.

[3] For this important distinction between "literary" or "rhapsodic" hymns and "cultic" hymns, see Furley and Bremer (2001) 42–43 and Faulkner and Hodkinson (2015) 9–10.

[4] A much earlier version of this argument about the Chyrses episode appeared as Faraone (2015).

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are unparalleled elsewhere in the *Iliad*.[5] Others have argued in addition that the content was out of step with the heroic poem that followed[6] or that the formulae, language, and lack of similes in the episode reflected a "later" stratum of composition, one connected with the poet who shaped the monumental *Iliad*.[7] In different ways, then, scholars have noted how the episode differs from the rest of the poem and in what follows I put forward an explanation: the Chryses episode was originally composed as the central narrative of a local hymn that explained how Apollo Smintheus once punished an impious king, who gravely insulted his priest, and why an important sacrifice and song-and-dance were inaugurated to gain back the god's favor.

I begin at the end of the story with the unanticipated paean singing at Chryse, which serves no purpose in the ongoing narrative of the *Iliad*, but which seems to provide an etiology for the paeans sung in the sanctuary of Apollo Smintheus. I then offer a detailed analysis of the two variant proems to an "older *Iliad*," which seem to reflect an earlier stage of composition, in which the poem began by focusing on the anger of Apollo (a common theme, for a local hymn), rather than the anger of Achilles. In the third section I survey the discontinuities of characterization between Book 1 and the rest of the poem, especially the character of Agamemnon, whom I compare with the royal "god-fighters" (*theomachoi*) who appear in other hymnic narratives, like Erysichthon in Callimachus' *Hymn to Demeter*. In the fourth and final section I expand upon these observations to discuss a variety of other cases in which shorter epichoric hymns seem to have been

[5] On the entire Chryses episode, see, e.g., Bassett (1923) 339–40, and Havelock (1963) 65: "economy of treatment and a degree of dramatic power and controlled patterns of shifting moods and scenes." For the first part of the story, see Griffith and Hammond (1982) 128: ". . . the narrative from line 8 to 52 is developed in a way, and above all at a speed, which marks it off as preliminary; the compression of the speeches and the swift changes of place . . . produce a rapidity highly unusual in Homer, from which we emerge into a more typically Homeric pace when the quarrel begins between Achilles and Agamemnon." Edwards (1980) 11 notes how the poet composed 1.44–53 (Apollo's attack) as a short, powerful scene and how in the next scene "the poet is still moving swiftly." Pulleyn (2000) 116, agrees: "The first fifty-two lines constitute a distinct unit, differentiated from what follows by the extraordinary pace and compression of the narrative and speeches . . . not typical of Homeric style in general." Seth Schein points out to me that Kullmann (1960) 287–90 argued that the *Iliad* poet adopted or transformed this material from some earlier epic source, rather than a hymn.

[6] Havelock (1963) 77: "the whole forms a little idyll, a tableau of religious but also social usage, hardened and preserved in epic verse."

[7] Griffith and Hammond (1982) 134, note that all of *Iliad* 1 is remarkable for the absence of developed similes of the Homeric type, an absence they attribute to the speed of events. For formulae and language, see Chantraine (1932) 121–54 and Shipp (1972) 226–31, who argues that lines 1–420 are generally "late," with the exception of Athena's intervention (193–222) and Nestor's story about the Lapiths (260–74); Shipp was especially struck by nine instances of the use of the article in the first two hundred lines. More recently, see Goold (1977) 33: "I cannot think of our present *Iliad* 1 as anything but a very late book."

embedded into Panhellenic narratives—for example, the so-called "Hymn to the Muses" at the start of the Hesiodic *Theogony*, the Eleusinian episode at the heart of the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, or the Delian and Crisaean sections of the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*.[8] In the end I shall argue that the *Iliad* poet adapted large parts of a freestanding local hymn as an apt and morally charged introduction to his long epic poem. The poet, in short, by choosing a familiar type of hymnic narrative as a stepping-off point for his monumental *Iliad*, is able at the very start to distinguish two of its most important characters in the context of traditional religion: Agamemnon as the impious king, who risks the destruction of his people, and Achilles as an essentially good and pious warrior, who sides with priest and seer alike and looks to the greater good of the people. These first impressions are, of course, mitigated and compromised in the course of the long poem, but they persist, I shall argue, as first impressions often do, in our appreciation and comprehension of these two complicated and divisive characters. We shall see, however, that something else is afoot in the parallel cases in which a Homeric hymn or the Hesiodic *Theogony* embeds an epichoric hymn. There we shall repeatedly see the desire of the poet to include, but subsume, local and probably earlier hymns, for example, when the composer of the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* takes two local hymns, originally performed on Delos or in Crisa, and embeds them into a wider Panhellenic narrative about the superiority of Apollo's temple at Delphi.

3.1 The Unexpected Paean at the Temple of Apollo Smintheus

The very last scene of the Chryses episode points unequivocally to its origins as an epichoric cult hymn.[9] The poet describes a series of rituals at the sanctuary of Apollo Smintheus: the participants offer a hecatomb at the altar of the god, they feast on the meat made available by the sacrifice, and then they drink wine and sing a special song for Apollo called a paean (*Iliad* 1.447–74). This is, in fact, the second round of ritual activity in response to the plague, because, even before the ship arrives at Chryse, the Greeks who

[8] This is not an entirely new idea—see, e.g., Faulkner and Hodkinson (2015) 7: "Greek hymns . . . can also be integrated as distinct entities within larger wholes, as in the case of the hymn to the Muses at the outset of Hesiod's *Theogony*."

[9] Petrovic (2013) 209.

remain behind in the camp at Troy perform ablutions, throw the polluted water into the sea, and then offer Apollo a hecatomb of bulls and goats (314–17). We are, however, given no explanation for the immediate purification of the army or this hecatomb in the camp, neither of which was commanded by Agamemnon, and some editors saw evidence here for two versions of the hecatomb sacrifice. Lachmann and Leaf wanted, in fact, to athetize the entire expedition to Chryse (lines 430–87) because of this redundancy and because of the high frequency of "Odyssean" language in the scenes at the harbor and temple.[10] The vulgate *Iliad* cannot, of course, do without the expedition to Apollo's sanctuary, because much earlier in Book 1 Calchas had made it clear that it was Apollo's demand that they "lead a hecatomb to Chryse" (99–100). The redundancy of the two hecatombs, one at Chryse and the other at Troy, suggests from the start, however, that the later ritual scenes at Apollo's temple do indeed sit uncomfortably in the compositional tradition of the poem.

But more puzzling—and as far as I can tell hitherto unremarked by scholars—is the singing of the paean, because the poet does not prepare us for it at all, although he had at least three opportunities to do so. Calchas tells the Achaeans that Apollo will continue the plague until they give the girl back to her father (98) and offer a *hecatomb* to the god (99); Agamemnon commands his men to prepare a ship for the daughter's return (143) and to carry a *hecatomb* (142 and 147); and upon his arrival at Chryse, Odysseus explains to the old priest that Agamemnon sent him to bring the girl back and offer a *hecatomb* (443–44).[11] None of these speeches mentions the paean, and in fact all three iterations stress the desire to please the god with girl and sacrifice alone (100: ἱλασσάμενοι; 145: ἱλάσσεαι; and 445: ἱλασόμεσθα).[12] When the poet finally describes the scene at Chryse, however, he says that only the song was pleasing to the god, and emphatically so: "all day long they sought to appease the god with song-and-dance (μολπῇ θεὸν ἱλάσκοντο) by singing the paean (ἀείδοντες παιήονα)[13] . . . singing-and-dancing (μέλποντες) for

[10] Kakridis (1971) 128–29 summarizes of the early arguments of Lachmann and Leaf for rejection, and Goold (1977) 33 those against. For a detailed discussion of the "Odyssean" language, see Goold (1977) 33 and Kirk (1985) ad loc.

[11] When Achilles describes to his mother the events at the Greek camp, he is a bit vaguer, but even here there is no evidence for any preparations for or knowledge of the singing of paeans: he mentions only the girl and the "gifts" (390: δῶρα) for the "lord" (i.e., Apollo).

[12] Petrovic (2013) 209.

[13] The syntax of these lines is ambiguous and can refer either to the god (Paean) or the song (paean); see Rutherford (2001) 13–14.

the far-shooter and, as he (i.e., Apollo) heard it, he was glad in his heart (ὁ δὲ φρένα τέρπετ' ἀκούων)" (472–74).[14]

We are, then, entirely unprepared for the crucial importance of the paean at Chryse. One might claim, of course, that the paean was a standard part of a sacrificial type-scene in epic, but in fact, aside from the performance near the end of the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* of a different kind of marching paean (discussed below in Section 3.4), this is the only occasion in archaic hexametrical narrative when a paean is described. There is, moreover, an excessive emphasis on the details of the ritual setting: the scene at Chryse is, in fact, the longest and most detailed description of a ritual in all of extant epic, with the exception of Nestor's elaborate sacrifice to Athena in the *Odyssey*.[15] The poet, moreover, introduces a second and equally unexpected element into the scene: the young age of the ritual performers. Earlier in the poem, when Agamemnon orders his men to prepare the ship, we hear only that twenty men are chosen as "oarsmen" (142 and 309: ἐρέτας) and that Odysseus will serve as captain. We expect, of course, that Odysseus and these oarsmen will perform the sacrifice, when they get to the sanctuary, because both Agamemnon and Odysseus say so (147: ἱέρα ῥέξας and 443–44: ἑκατόμβην ῥέξαι), and indeed, after the Greeks arrive, the poet falls into a standard type-scene for sacrifice and we presume that Odysseus and his sailors are the agents throughout.[16] Lines 462–63, however, seem to introduce new participants, or at least distinguish them from the rest of the worshippers:

> καῖε δ' ἐπὶ σχίζῃς ὁ γέρων, ἐπὶ δ' αἴθοπα οἶνον
> λεῖβε: νέοι δὲ παρ' αὐτὸν ἔχον πεμπώβολα χερσίν.
>
> The old man burnt the offering on skewers, and over it sparkling wine
> poured; young men next to him were holding five-pronged forks in their hands.

The poet thus uses these unique lines[17] to differentiate the ritual participants by age:[18] "the old man" (462: ὁ γέρων), presumably Chryses himself, performs, while "young men" (463: νέοι) attend him holding their five-pronged

[14] Rabel (1990) 434–35 stresses how the song-and-dance please Apollo, but insists that "Apollo's delight in the Achaeans will only be temporary; he remains their enemy throughout the *Iliad*."

[15] Edwards (1980) 21; Rabel (1990) 434; and Graf (2009a) 10.

[16] Lines 458–69, for example, recur nearly verbatim in the description of Agamemnon's sacrifice before the feast of the chieftains in the next book (2.421–32).

[17] Gunn (1971) 23–24.

[18] Kirk (1985) 102 notes that by referring to Chryses as the "old man" leading the sacrifice, the poet shows how he has carefully adjusted the formulaic scene to the particular circumstances at Chryse; he does not explain, however, why the poet takes equal care to describe the other central participants as "young men."

forks. There is, moreover, marked local color in the last detail, because some ancient readers thought that this use of a five-pronged fork to roast the entrails marked the performers as Greeks living in Aeolia, a region along the Anatolian shore that included the Sminthian sanctuary in the southern Troad.[19]

Ten lines later we are told that "youths" (473: κοῦροι), presumably these same young men, are also the ones who sing the paean (469–74):

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἕντο,
κοῦροι μὲν κρητῆρας ἐπεστέψαντο ποτοῖο,
νώμησαν δ᾽ ἄρα πᾶσιν ἐπαρξάμενοι δεπάεσσιν·
οἳ δὲ πανημέριοι μολπῇ θεὸν ἱλάσκοντο
καλὸν ἀείδοντες παιήονα κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν
μέλποντες ἑκάεργον· ὃ δὲ φρένα τέρπετ᾽ ἀκούων.

But when they had set aside their desire for drink and food,
the youths filled the mixing bowls to the brim with drink
and distributed it to all, after placing a few drops as first offerings in the
cups. And all day long they tried to appease the god with song-and-dance[20]
as they were singing the beautiful paean, the youths of the Achaeans
celebrating the Far-worker in song-and-dance. And he, as he listened,
rejoiced in his heart.

Who are these youths? The poet, it seems, wishes us to equate them with the twenty Greek oarsmen from the camp at Troy, for he ends the scene by asserting that the κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν are singing the hymn (473). Since the phrase κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν can sometimes be used generically for all Achaeans,[21] perhaps we need not conclude that the paean singers are literally "young men" in age. But coming in quick succession here after *neoi* (463) and *kouroi* by itself (470), one might also suggest that in an earlier version of the episode these "youths" were the local young men at Chryse, who assist the priest in the sacrifice and sing the paean.[22]

[19] The Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer* 37 quotes this couplet to prove that Homer was Aeolian, "because it is only the Aeolians who roast entrails on five prongs, while other Hellenes do it on three, and because the Aeolians use *pempe* for 'five' instead of *pente*." Bryant Kirkland (2018) 313–14, sees this as a self-consciously "Herodotean" touch. In the same passage the *Life* quotes the three preceding verses in the passage (1.459–61) and claims that the absence of any sacrificial use of the loin (*osphys*) in this scene points in the same direction because "the Aeolian race is unique among the Hellenes in not burning the loin."

[20] Georgoudi (2001) 1–3 discusses the difficulty in translating of verb *molpein*, which essentially means to "sing-and-move," especially the feet, either in a stamping motion or a dance.

[21] Seven times in the *Iliad*, e.g., 2.562, 3.183, etc.

[22] Line 473 has, moreover, been suspected. Edwards (1980) 22 n. 53 points out that it is obelized in one of the papyri and that the κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν is "oddly placed after the subject οἱ in the preceding verse." Aristarchus, on the other hand, athetized 474; see Kirk (1985) ad loc.

The paean performed by the youths at Chryse, in short, does not sit comfortably within the first book of the *Iliad*, because it is not motivated by the ongoing plot of the poem (Calchas, Agamemnon, and Odysseus all fail to mention it), nor is it defensible as a formal feature of a Homeric type-scene, because it is unique. These unexpected rituals at the very end of the Chryses episode seem to point, in fact, to a local foundation story for the paean sung and danced by youths at the sanctuary of Apollo Smintheus, which stood in Chryse, on or near the coast of the Troad, an important detail that we discover at the start of the first prayer of the priest: "Hear me, you of the silver bow, who straddle Chryse and holy Killa and who rule powerfully over Tenedos, Smintheus . . ." (37–39).[23] The topographical details in this prayer are extraordinary: in the space of a couplet the priest mentions three different places in the Troad[24] and then addresses the god as "Smintheus," an old and strange local epithet (unique, really) that means something like "Mouse-god."[25] Modern scholars agree that this epithet refers to Apollo as the sender of the plague, although the explicit connection between the god and the rodent is still unclear.[26] Chryses invokes Apollo, therefore, as a local plague god and although he is said to come "from the peaks of Olympus," when he attacks the Greek camp at the very start of the poem (line 44), we see none of the elaborate divine machinery that is typical of such interventions in epic narrative. When Athena, for example, prevents Achilles from killing Agamemnon later in Book 1, she comes down from Olympus at the behest of Hera, who (we presume) is watching the events in the camp unfold just as we do. And when her work is done, she quickly returns to Olympus. Apollo Smintheus, on the other hand, is a god of a local cult: he comes as soon as his priest summons him with the proper prayer and later he is fully present in his sanctuary to receive the hecatomb and to be pleased by the paean. He is, for the moment at least, entirely distant from the Panhellenic gods of Olympus and unconnected to the lyre-playing Apollo, who appears in Olympus about one hundred lines later as he is performing with the antiphonal Muses (603–4).

[23] His second prayer (*Il.* 1.451–52) begins in nearly identical fashion, lacking only the final epithet "Smintheus."

[24] Cook (1973) 228–31 discusses ancient (i.e., Strabo) and modern disagreements over the site of Chryse and the ruins of the sanctuary of Apollo Smintheus, which have never been properly excavated.

[25] According to the D-Scholia, the epithet Smintheus is derived from *sminthos*, a word that means "mouse" in the local Mysian dialect.

[26] Faraone (1992b) 128–32 and Pulleyn (2000) ad loc.

It turns out, in fact, that in classical times Apollo was still being worshipped along the western coast of Anatolia by young men, who sang the paean around his altar and asked him to spare the young men of the community. The best evidence is found in an early fourth-century *lex sacra* from Erythrae,[27] a city on the Anatolian coast about a hundred miles south of Troy; the inscription orders worshippers to stand around the altar of Apollo (περὶ τὸν βωμὸν τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος) and sing a short paean that ends with the request "Ie Paean, O Lord Apollo, spare the youths!" (ἰὴ Παιάν, [ὦ] ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, φείδεο κούρων).[28] On the same stone we find the earliest version of the so-called "Erythraean Paean," a heavily dactylic composition that begins, "Sing, youths, of Paean, famed for his cleverness, the son of Leto, who shoots from afar, ie Paean!" (Παιᾶνα κλυτόμητιν ἀείσατε, κοῦροι, Λατοΐδαν ἕκατον, ἰὲ Παιάν).[29] A paean composed in the same tradition by Macedonicus in the second century BCE imagines a similar performance by Athenian youths holding suppliant branches:[30]

> With a heart well-disposed and a propitious tongue, sing of the Delian god with his beautiful quiver (Δήλιον εὐφαρέτραν), the son of Zeus, of the silver bow (Ζηνὸς γόνον ὑμνεῖτ' ἀργυρότ[οξον]), ie Paean!
>
> Take up in your palms, O Athenian lads (κοῦροι Ἀθηναίων), the suppliant bough of beautiful olive-wood and the gleaming branch of laurel, ie Paean!
>
> O lads ([κο]ῦρ[οι]), would that a blameless hymn might sing of the far-shooting son of Leto (Λητοΐδην ἕκατον).

This poet identifies the performers as generic "youths" in the final section, but as "Athenian youths" in the second, the same variation we find in the Homeric description. In both paeans, moreover, Apollo is identified as the dangerous archer god who must be appeased, just as he was at Chryse. It would seem, in short, that in the Ionian-Aeolian cultural realm at least, local youths sang paeans annually to Apollo on behalf of the city or in times of crisis.[31] This ritual suggests, in turn, that the paean at the end of the Chryses

[27] For text and earlier bibliography, see Engelmann and Merkelbach (1973) no. 205.

[28] Fairbanks (1900) 48–49 and Stehle (1997) 26–27.

[29] The Erythraean inscription is lacunose at the start, but the text is certain thanks to three later versions on stone; see Furley and Bremer (2001) 161–67. For the heavily dactylic nature of this paean; see Faraone (2011a).

[30] Furley and Bremer (2001) 228–32 and Faraone (2011a).

[31] Macedonicus' poem might have been composed in a time of real crisis—it ends with a plea, ". . . may you always come close and keep Attica, the Cecropian city, safe (σώιζοις δ' Ἀτθίδα Κεκροπίαν

episode is in fact appropriately sung by local youths at Chryse, who, like those at Erythrae and Athens, sing and dance and ask Apollo to spare them from death and let them grow into manhood, presumably using the same words and gestures as their fathers, uncles, and older brothers before them.
I propose, therefore, that the Homeric poet included this traditional but unexpected paean in the events at Chryse, because it was a central part of the original hymn and because it fit the ritual context: singing and dancing in order to please Apollo and stop the killing.[32] But I should stress here that the paean is not itself the embedded hymn to Apollo Smintheus. It is simply described, but not quoted, at the end of the hymn—a description that originally served, no doubt, as an etiological story that explained why young men annually offer hecatombs and sing paeans at the Sminthean god's sanctuary in the Troad. Such detailed cultic etiologies are typically not part of the Panhellenic repertoire of Homeric performance, of course, but, as we shall see below, they are common stock in local Greek hymns, and they do show up occasionally in a few sections of the Homeric *Hymns* that also derive from such epichoric traditions.

3.2 Variant Versions of the *Iliad* Proem

We are used to thinking that the *Iliad* began with that canonical verse, "Sing, Muse, the wrath of Achilles. . . ," and indeed this is more or less how all of our manuscripts of the poem begin. In recent years, however, scholars have taken interest in references to an "older *Iliad*, the one known as Apellicon's," which began differently, either by introducing more directly the tale of Apollo's anger alone or by introducing a doubled plot of two very different angers: the *mênis* of Apollo and the *cholos* of Achilles.[33] The *Anecdotum Romanorum*

πόλιν), ie Paean! Be gentle, O blessed one, and keep away hateful diseases (στυγερὰς δ' ἀπέρυκε νόσου[ς]), ie ô ie Paean!" On the other hand, we know that paeans were also sung annually as a kind of preventive measure. The pattern seems to be that paeans sung in a crisis become part of the annual calendar of rituals to be repeated each year; see Faraone (2011a) for a full discussion.

[32] Most notable is the contradiction within the standard sacrifice scene, which ends thus: "But when they had put from them the desire for drink and food" (469), but then continues on with the "youths" setting out mixing bowls of drink and pouring libations (470–71).

[33] For the Greek text and discussion of the two variants, see Van der Valk (1964) 365–66; and Kirk (1985) 52–53. Apellicon died in 84 BCE, but it seems that this version was known at least a century earlier; see West (2011) 73. Recently these alternate proems have been of renewed and serious interest as bona fide archaic compositions, perhaps by rhapsodes; see, e.g., Nagy (2010) 109–20; West (2011) 81–83; Katz (2013) and (2018); Elmer (2013) 156; and Tomasso (2016).

cites Nicanor and Crates for the information that this "older" *Iliad* began as follows:[34]

> Μούσας ἀείδω καὶ Ἀπόλλωνα κλυτότοξον
> Λητοῦς καὶ Διὸς υἱόν· ὁ γὰρ βασιλῆι χολωθείς. . . .
>
> The Muses I sing, and Apollo famed for his bow,
> the son of Leto and Zeus, for when he got angry with the king. . . .

Some dismiss these lines as "peculiar" and a remnant of later rhapsodic performance,[35] but others have argued that they could indeed be archaic.[36] That another poet might at the very start of the *Iliad* introduce Apollo alone as the plague-dealing archer god is not surprising, of course, but why are the Muses mentioned as well? With the exception of the Hesiodic *Theogony* (and a short Homeric hymn dependent upon it) the Muses are never named in the first line of a heroic narrative or hymn as the *subject* of song, but only as the facilitators or the sources of it.[37] Such a combination might be easier to explain, of course, if Apollo were identified here by one of his "musical" epithets or were described holding a lyre, as he is, for instance, when we see him leading the Muses in song on Olympus at the end of *Iliad* 1 or at the start of the Pythian section of the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*.[38] For the argument at hand, however, the presence of the Muses is far less disconcerting than the complete absence of Achilles.

Aristoxenus apparently disagreed with Nicanor and Crates and claimed that this "older *Iliad*" began with three very different verses:

> ἔσπετε νῦν μοι, Μοῦσαι, Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι
> ὅππως δὴ μῆνίς τε χόλος θ' ἕλε Πηλείωνα
> Λητούς τ' ἀγλαὸν υἱόν· ὁ γὰρ βασιλῆι χολωθείς. . . .

[34] For this text and the second alternate proem cited by Aristoxenus (discussed below), I follow the text and translation of West (2011).

[35] West (2011) 81.

[36] See, e.g., Nagy (2010) 109, who thinks this version was earlier than the vulgate version, and Katz (2013), who argues for the early date of the "hymnic long alpha" in ἀείδω. Tomasso (2016) 383 remarks that "perhaps the Apellicon proem prefaced another version of the *Iliad* that concentrated on Apollo's anger and the plague episode familiar from *Iliad* 1" (an insight he credits to an anonymous reviewer).

[37] *Theogony* 1 ("I begin to sing from the Heliconian Muses, who . . .") and Homeric *Hymn* 25.1 ("I begin from the Muses, Apollo and Zeus"). The latter goes on to quote lines 94–97 and 963 of the *Theogony*. Nagy (1992b) 55–56 suggests that the *Theogony* itself is an expansion of the minimal information contained in the hymn.

[38] *Iliad* 1.603–4 and Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* 182–206; in both cases the poet first describes Apollo playing the lyre and then the Muses singing. There is one other place in archaic poetry where we find the Muses linked with a bow-bearing Apollo: *Theogony* 94–97, which begins, "For from the Muses and far-shooting Apollo mortal singers and lyre players come. . . ." Here the discrepancy is even greater, because the archer Apollo is said to be the source or patron of the lyre player.

> Tell me now, O Muses, who have Olympian homes,
> how indeed rage and anger seized the son of Peleus
> and the gleaming son of Leto. For when he got angry with the king. . . .

Scholars usually treat this version of the proem as a clumsy abbreviation[39] of the first nine lines of the vulgate *Iliad*, since both end with the same half-verse (*Iliad* 1.1–9):[40]

> μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
> οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε,
> πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
> ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
> οἰωνοῖσί τε δαῖτα, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή,
> ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
> Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.
> τίς τ' ἄρ σφωε θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι;
> Λητοῦς καὶ Διὸς υἱός· ὁ γὰρ βασιλῆϊ χολωθείς. . . .
>
> The wrath sing, goddess, of Peleus' son Achilles,
> the murderous wrath, which set myriad sufferings for the Achaeans,
> and sent many strong spirits to Hades before their time,
> spirits of warriors and their bodies prepared as spoils for dogs
> and a feast for birds. And the plan of Zeus was being accomplished,
> from that time when the two of them first stood apart quarreling,
> the son of Atreus, lord of men, and gleaming Achilles.
> Which of the gods, then, thrust the two of them together to battle in strife?
> The son of Leto and Zeus, for when he got angry with the king. . . .

Commentators have long noted that the question in line 8 of the vulgate proem ("Which of the gods . . .") sets in motion the initial narrative about Apollo's anger, but the precise logic of the preceding seven verses eludes us.[41] When the poet asserts in lines 8–9, for example, that Apollo is the god who "thrust the two of them together to battle in strife," we are puzzled, because in the subsequent narrative there is no evidence that Apollo ever aimed to create strife within the Greek camp, although from a divine partisan of the Trojans this action would not be unexpected. But as the story unfolds in *Iliad* 1, the god desires simply to punish Agamemnon's impiety by sending a plague, a

[39] See, e.g., Kirk (1985) 52 ("the first of these verses is Iliadic . . . , but the others show signs of inept condensation, and in particular the linking of Akhilleus' and Apollo's wrath does justice to neither"); Pulleyn (2000) 116 ("wholly pedestrian and . . . to be rejected as the work of an inferior hand"); Burgess (2001) 16 ("condensed"); and West (2011) 81. Burgess (2004) 5 suggests it was shortened by a rhapsode to make for a smoother transition between the end of the *Cypria* and the start of the *Iliad*.

[40] I give Zenodotus' δαῖτα in line 5 in preference to the vulgate's πᾶσι. See Pagliaro (1963) 35–37; Redfield (1979) 96 and 103–4; and Pulleyn (2000) 121, for various defenses of the reading. Zenodotus athetized lines 4–5 and thereby removed the corpses torn apart by birds and dogs, as well as "the plan of Zeus"; no modern editors, to my knowledge, have followed suit.

[41] For difficulties and ambiguities with the vulgate proem, see Böhme (1937) 28–31; for a recent summary with an abundant bibliography see Marks (2002) 12–19.

common pattern in myths about Apollo, especially in western Anatolia.[42] The poet underscores Apollo's rather simple goal later in Book 1, when, after the sacrifice and paean at his temple, Apollo quickly relents from his anger against the Greeks and even sends their ship back to Troy with a favoring wind (lines 470–79). Apollo, in short, seems oblivious to the tensions in the Greek camp and even to the ongoing war at Troy. He reacts purely as a local deity, who is quickly angered at a slight, but then easily placated by restitution and gift giving.[43]

Viewed from the perspective of the two shorter variants, then, the longer vulgate proem, although it eventually became the canonical one, seems to struggle a bit to combine the two angers and the two stories into a single narrative. Or to put it another way, all three proems end with the same half-verse, which describes how Apollo got angry with a king. Apellicon's proem gets us to that point in a single line, by ignoring Achilles entirely; this opening may seem too abrupt to modern readers, but it is the length of a typical introduction to a short Homeric hymn.[44] The text quoted by Aristoxenus gets us there in two verses by mentioning the anger of both individuals, but then choosing to tell first the story of Apollo's wrath. Presumably the story about the wrath of Achilles followed thereafter, just as it does in the vulgate.[45] The vulgate, of course, by taking eight lines to get us into the narrative, expands the focus of the proem and also adds important information—especially about the plan (*boulê*) of Zeus (line 5)—that is crucial for the monumental version of the poem that follows.[46] Thus, although some scholars dismiss Aristoxenus' three-verse variant as an inept condensation of the vulgate, we might say more charitably that it deals much more economically and gracefully with the compositional problem of narrating the twinned angers. It nicely interweaves, for example, the two stories into a single sentence: "how indeed rage and anger seized the son of Peleus and the gleaming son of Leto" (ὅππως δὴ μῆνίς τε χόλος θ' ἕλε Πηλείωνα Λητούς τ' ἀγλαὸν υἱόν).[47] By doubling of the words for anger, moreover, this poet creates a neat *chiasmos*,

[42] Faraone (1992b) 57–66.

[43] Note, also, that Chryses, despite his home close to Troy, is never said to be a Trojan ally and that he mentions Apollo's worship in Chryse, Killa, and Tenedos, but not in Troy, which according to the wider war narrative was the most powerful city in the region.

[44] Maslov (2015) 222.

[45] Elmer (2013) 156 suggests, in fact, that it introduced "Apollo's *Iliad*, a version of the Iliadic tradition anchored in a particularly direct way to Apollo's point of view."

[46] Van Groningen (1946).

[47] Rabel (1990) 431 n. 7, comments, "However inept as a substitute for the more common prologue, these verses nicely isolate and connect the wraths of Apollo and Achilles."

in which *mênis* appropriately seizes Apollo and then *cholos* seizes Achilles, and which then allows the poet to launch directly into the story of Apollo's anger at Agamemnon,[48] without any hint of the god's unattested desire to foment strife among the two Achaean leaders. Aristoxenus' proem, moreover, observes—as the vulgate proem does not—the traditional distinction between *mênis*, the supernatural rage that is proper to the gods, and *cholos*, the anger that both gods and mortals experience.[49]

The proem to the "older *Iliad*" favored by Aristoxenus also preserves the proper sequence of events narrated in the poem: first *mênis* (the god is enraged at the outrageous mistreatment of his priest) and then *cholos* (the hero is enraged at the outrageous seizure of his war booty). I am not arguing, of course, that the composer of the first line of the vulgate proem made a mistake when he attributes *mênis* to Achilles, because this decision adds enormous complexity to the characterization of Achilles, who indeed from the very beginning of the poem seems tragically caught between the world of the immortal gods and that of mortal men. I am suggesting only that the poet who created Aristoxenus' proem did not necessarily shorten the vulgate version—we have no evidence that he knew the vulgate at all—and he might have aimed, in fact, at a more straightforward solution to the problem of the twin angers in *Iliad* 1. Indeed, we find evidence for this simpler kind of proem in the vulgate itself, at the start of the reluctant report that the seer Calchas gives to the Greek assembly (74–75):

> ὦ Ἀχιλλεῦ, κέλεαί με, διίφιλε, μυθήσασθαι
> μῆνιν Ἀπόλλωνος, ἑκατηβελέταο ἄνακτος.
>
> O Achilles, you bid me, beloved of Zeus, to tell about
> the *mênis* of Apollo, the far-shooting lord.

The second line, with its verse-initial placement of the word μῆνις followed by the name and traditional epithets of the plague-sending god, sounds, in fact, like another good way to begin a local hymn to Apollo. And indeed, Calchas then goes on to explain the cause of the god's *mênis* (93–96)—something that up to this point is known only to the omniscient poet—and he uses much of

[48] I am not convinced by Tomasso's claim (2016) 391–97 that μῆνίς τε χόλος θ' presents a case of hendiadys; in the two parallels he cites, the paired words are used to describe a *single* person, Zeus in *Iliad* 15.122, and Demeter in the *Homeric Hymn* 349–50, not with a pair of individuals surrounding them as we see here.

[49] This general pattern is clear with regard to the nominal forms *mênis* and *cholos*; see, e.g., Watkins (1977) 187–209; Redfield (1979): 97–98; or Rabel (1990) 431. Considine (1966) points out, however, that there are exceptions and that the same pattern is difficult to trace in the usage of the cognate verbs.

the poet's own language to do so.[50] Calchas, moreover, sums up his advice to the Greeks by saying, "It is on account of this, therefore, that the far-shooter gave pains (ἄλγε' ἔδωκεν) and will give them still" (96). Calchas makes clear in the very next line that these "pains" afflicted the Greeks (97: Δαναοῖσιν), and here, too, the seer echoes the words of the omniscient poet, who in the second line of the vulgate proem describes how anger, albeit of Achilles, "set myriad pains for the Achaeans" (2: μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε). And when Agamemnon gives a résumé of Calchas' words a bit later in the poem, he, too, claims that Apollo, not Achilles, was the source of the ἄλγεα (110: ἑκήβολος ἄλγεα τεύχει). In fact, aside from line 2 of the traditional proem and one other verse in the *Iliad* (22.422, where Achilles is again the source) the giver or sender of "pains" (ἄλγεα) in extant epic narrative is always a god or a personified curse, and never a mortal.[51] Indeed, Koller proposed long ago that the formula μῆνιν ἄειδε originally arose in a cultic setting and that it always referred to the anger of a god.[52]

The two alternate versions of the *Iliad* proem, along with the wording and content of Calchas' prophecy, suggest, therefore, that some poets began their performances of an "older *Iliad*" with the anger of Apollo alone or with the entwined angers of both Apollo and Achilles. The first four verses of the vulgate proem itself, moreover, use words and phrases traditionally associated with the gods (e.g., *mênis* and the giving or sending of *algea*), language that thereby prepares us better for Apollo's immediate assault on the Greek camp, than for the carnage that subsequently plays out on the battlefield of Troy as a result of Achilles' wrath and withdrawal. Again I should stress that I do not think the poet of the vulgate botched his proem, but rather that, while performing in the same tradition that produced the variant proems, he came up with a radical and even better idea: that the human anger (*cholos*) of Achilles was not simply parallel to that of the divine rage (*mênis*) of Apollo, but rather that Achilles himself, although half-mortal, was capable of this same divine rage and equally able to send "pains" (*algea*) to the Greeks, just as Apollo did.

[50] See, e.g., Pulleyn (2000) ad loc.: "Calchas repeats the poet virtually word for word . . . [which] reinforces our impression that Calchas as seer shares Homer's all-seeing perspective."

[51] Redfield (1979) 101; at *Iliad* 22 Priam complains that Achilles has set more pains for him personally than all the other Greek fighters, because he has killed so many of his sons.

[52] Koller (1956) 200–201 defended his hypothesis by adducing the opening line of a lost "Orphic hymn" to Demeter, quoted by a late source (Ps.-Justinus *Cohortatio ad gentiles* 17c 1 Morel): Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Δημήτερος ἀγλαοκάρπου. See Maslov (2015) 222 n. 79 for further discussion.

3.3 Impious Kings and Other Hymnic Characters

Discontinuities of characterization provide a third set of clues to the hymnic origins of the Chryses episode. First and foremost is the nearly complete absence in *Iliad* 1 of individual Trojan characters such as Hector, Paris, and Priam, although this omission can be explained by the poet's initial focus on the Greek camp.[53] Even more surprisingly, we see or hear almost nothing of other important Greek characters, such as Menelaus or Patroclus, except the latter's brief role in the scene where the heralds come for Briseis.[54] But even the Greeks who do play a role in *Iliad* 1 differ in important ways from their later appearances in the poem. The poet, for instance, briefly but finely draws Calchas the seer as a character of interest and integrity, raising the expectation that we shall see more of him in the long narrative that follows; but he disappears almost entirely from the rest of the poem.[55] Even more puzzling is the fact that in the Chryses episode Achilles piously supports Apollo's seer Calchas and then presses for ransoming the daughter of Apollo's priest, whereas elsewhere in the poem this same god is depicted as the staunch defender of Troy and Achilles' enemy.[56]

It is, however, the initial characterization of Agamemnon as an impious and selfish king that points most clearly to the hymnic source for the Chryses episode. He speaks for the first time in the poem, after Apollo's priest arrives at the Greek camp in full priestly garb and offers to ransom his daughter Chryseis (22–32):

> ἔνθ᾽ ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες ἐπευφήμησαν Ἀχαιοὶ
> αἰδεῖσθαί θ᾽ ἱερῆα καὶ ἀγλαὰ δέχθαι ἄποινα:
> ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ Ἀτρεΐδῃ Ἀγαμέμνονι ἥνδανε θυμῷ,
> ἀλλὰ κακῶς ἀφίει, κρατερὸν δ᾽ ἐπὶ μῦθον ἔτελλε·
> μή σε γέρον κοίλῃσιν ἐγὼ παρὰ νηυσὶ κιχείω
> ἢ νῦν δηθύνοντ᾽ ἢ ὕστερον αὖτις ἰόντα,

[53] There are three references to the city in Book 1—"the city of Priam" (19), Ilium (69), "the city of the Trojans" (164)—and six to the Trojans en masse (152, 160, 256, 408, 509, 521). Individual Trojans are mentioned only twice: first when Achilles predicts the deaths of many Greeks "at the hands of man-slaughtering Hector" (242) and a little later, when Nestor suggests hypothetically that "Priam, the sons of Priam and the other Trojans" (255–56) would rejoice if they heard about the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles.

[54] Menelaus is mentioned once by Achilles (159), but appears nowhere in the narrative. In 307 Patroclus is mentioned by patronymic in the company of Achilles and the other Myrmidons. In the scene with the heralds Achilles tells Patroclus to get the girl (337), which he does in lines 345–47.

[55] Calchas appears only one other time (and indirectly) in *Iliad* 2.300–332, when Odysseus describes the portent at Aulis nine years earlier and quotes verbatim Calchas' prophetic interpretation. At 13.43–65, Poseidon appears briefly in Calchas' form to encourage the two Aiantes on the battlefield.

[56] Rabel (1990) 429–30. In the Chryses episode, Achilles himself rightly boasts to have been the first to say that the Greeks should propitiate Apollo (1.386).

μή νύ τοι οὐ χραίσμῃ σκῆπτρον καὶ στέμμα θεοῖο·
τὴν δ᾽ ἐγὼ οὐ λύσω: πρίν μιν καὶ γῆρας ἔπεισιν
ἡμετέρῳ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ἐν Ἄργεϊ τηλόθι πάτρης
ἱστὸν ἐποιχομένην καὶ ἐμὸν λέχος ἀντιόωσαν·
ἀλλ᾽ ἴθι, μή μ᾽ ἐρέθιζε, σαώτερος ὥς κε νέηαι.

And all of the other Achaeans shouted their approval
for showing reverence to the priest and accepting the ransom,
but he did not please Agamemnon in his heart
and he sent him off basely and added a strong speech:
"Don't let *me* find you, old man, by the hollow ships,
either dallying now or coming again a second time,
lest then, indeed, the scepter and fillet of the god do you no good.
I will not free the girl. Before that even old age will come to her
in *our* house in Argos far away from her fatherland
plying the loom and coming to *my* bed.
But go! Don't annoy me, so you may return home more safely."

The verses describing the priest's daughter in Agamemnon's bed at Argos (29–31) have created the most uproar among commentators, both ancient and modern[57] and they were so offensive to Aristarchus that he removed them on the grounds that it was "unseemly" (ἀπρεπές) for Agamemnon to speak publicly before the army about his private life.[58] I suggest, however, that the perceived impropriety of his words is more a problem of poetic genre than internal audience, because they cast him in the role of the selfish and impious "god-fighter" (*theomachos*) that one typically finds in epichoric Greek hymns.[59]

Indeed, the most astonishing feature of Agamemnon's speech is his gross impiety toward Chryses as Apollo's priest (11: ἀρητήρ), a role that was immediately recognized by all in the Greek camp because he was "holding in

[57] See Sheppard (1922) 11–12 and Rabel (1988) 476 for the important point that, when Achilles reports to his mother the fateful events in the Greek assembly, the only lines the poet repeats verbatim are 372–79 (= 13–16 and 22–25) and that Achilles or the poet does so in order to emphasize the importance of Agamemnon's cruelty to the old suppliant. Griffith and Hammond (1982) 128, on the other hand, see Achilles' version as calmer and more detached because he omits entirely any direct speech. They call Agamemnon's performance "the speech of a bully"; Donlan (1971) 110, notes that it leaves a lasting impression of stubbornness, anger, and violence.

[58] Kirk (1985) ad loc. quotes and discusses the comments from the A Scholia.

[59] Some modern commentators suggest that these words are typical of Agamemnon's speaking style throughout the poem, but beyond the Chryses episode they are able to come up with only a single example of such impiety, at 6.58–60 (where he rebukes Menelaus for wanting to spare a Trojan and encourages him instead to let no Trojan male live, "not even the boy whom his mother carries in the womb"). There is, however, no impiety here and, in fact, the ancient scholiasts at this point in the poem actually defend his words as pious, on the grounds that earlier in the narrative the Trojans had called down utter destruction on their heads and their children, if they violated their oaths, and then violated them; see Graziosi and Haubold (2010) loc. cit. Sammons (2009) 175–78, suggests, moreover, that Agamemnon gives this speech in Book 6 in such a way that the army can overhear it and be rhetorically manipulated by it.

his hands the fillets of far-shooting Apollo along his golden scepter" (14–15: στέμματ᾽ ἔχων ἐν χερσὶν ἑκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος/ χρυσέῳ ἀνὰ σκήπτρῳ).[60] Chryses' special status is, in fact, underscored by the instinctive and pious reaction of all of the other Greeks "to reverence the priest" (22: αἰδεῖσθαί θ᾽ ἱερῆα). Agamemnon, on the other hand, threatens the priest twice with bodily harm (28 and 32), calling attention in the first instance to these same two symbols of his priestly office: "Don't let me find you . . . by the hollow ships, lest . . . the scepter and fillet of the god (σκῆπτρον καὶ στέμμα θεοῖο) do you no good" (26–28).[61] Chryses' initial speech, moreover, ends with the natural expectation that the Greeks (and Agamemnon) will accept the ransom "out of awe for the son of Zeus, Apollo who shoots from afar" (21: ἀζόμενοι Διὸς υἱὸν ἑκηβόλον Ἀπόλλωνα), an emphatically ponderous line almost entirely taken up with naming Apollo and stressing his reputation as a god who kills with his arrows.[62] The narrator, finally, registers this impiety when he himself notes that Agamemnon brushes the priest off basely (25: κακῶς ἀφίει).

This scene of a king threatening priests or other votaries shows up elsewhere in epichoric hymns or the Hellenistic poems that imitate them. A good example is the scene of Erysichthon's rash impiety in Callimachus' *Hymn to Demeter*, a mimetic hymn that is deeply embedded in a traditional ritual, the breaking of the fast at the Thesmophoria. Just as the sacrifices and rituals at Chryses are apparently performed by young men alone for Apollo, here the ritual performers are women, to the exclusion of men. The narrative of this hymn begins by relating how the goddess Demeter first becomes aware that Erysichthon and his men are cutting down a tree in her sacred grove and then appears to them disguised as her own priestess (42: ἀρατείρα), wearing all of the signs of her office (43-44): the fillets (στέμματα, like Chryses),[63] the poppy, and the temple key dangling from her shoulder. There is, in short, no way that Erysichthon could have mistaken her priestly status. And like Chryses, the disguised Demeter implores the young prince with a dignified and sensible speech, warning him to

[60] Kakridis (1971) 125–26, points out how the poet emphasizes the importance of Chryses' priestly role here, by making the participial phrase translated here the last of three rising tricola that describe the priest, who comes (i) to free his daughter, (ii) bearing ransom, and (iii) holding the *stemmata* and scepter of his priestly office.

[61] See Havelock (1963) 72 and Kakridis (1971) 128 for the importance of this repetition.

[62] Kakridis (1971) 128–29.

[63] Bulloch (1977) 102 notes the verbal reminiscence between *Iliad* 1.14 and Callimachus *Hymn to Demeter* 43–44 and that the plural form στέμματα appears only twice in Homer, both in the Chryses episode (*Iliad* 1.14 and the line repeated in Achilles' report of the scene to his mother at 1.373).

refrain from cutting down the tall poplar tree dedicated to the goddess (46–49). Erysichthon's fierce response rivals Agamemnon's in its impiety and selfishness (52–55):[64]

> χάζευ, ἔφα, μή τοι πέλεκυν μέγαν ἐν χροὶ πάξω.
> ταῦτα δ' ἐμὸν θησεῖ στεγανὸν δόμον, ᾧ ἔνι δαῖτας
> αἰὲν ἐμοῖς ἑτάροισιν ἄδαν θυμαρέας ἀξῶ.
>
> Be off with you, he said, lest I stick my great axe in your hide!
> These trees will roof over *my* hall, in which
> I shall sate *my* comrades constantly with delicious banquets.

Here, too, the narrator explicitly introduces the prince as an evil and shameless man (45: κακὸν καὶ ἀναιδέα φῶτα) and later tells us that Nemesis herself has noted down his evil speech (56: κακὰν φωνάν).

The parallels between the Callimachean hymn and *Iliad* 1 are clear enough and can be summarized easily:[65]

	Iliad 1	**Hymn to Demeter**
Title	11: ἀρητήρ 22: ἱερῆα	42: ἀρατείρα
Insignia	14: στέμματ' 15: χρυσέῳ ἀνὰ σκήπτρῳ 28: σκῆπτρον καὶ στέμμα	43-44: στέμματα, poppy, temple key
Narrator's assessment	25: κακῶς ἀφίει	45: κακὸν καὶ ἀναιδέα φῶτα 56: κακὰν φωνάν

In both poems, then, impious royals speak cruelly and basely to persons explicitly marked as priests and threaten their lives personally if they do not depart. Another obvious parallel is the "triumphant egoism" of Agamemnon's speech, which contains emphatic references to himself and focuses on his private desires:[66] he wants the girl for *his* house and for *his* bed (30–31: ἡμετέρῳ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ . . . καὶ ἐμὸν λέχος), just as Erysichthon wants the tree to build *his* lodge (54: ἐμὸν . . . δόμον) to feast *his* companions (55: ἐμοῖς ἑτάροισιν).

How, then, does one explain these parallels? Many would probably agree with Bulloch, at least initially, that Callimachus is directly imitating the

[64] Text and translation (except for my emphases) by Hopkinson (1984) ad loc.
[65] Bulloch (1977) 102–3.
[66] Kakridis (1971) 130 and Griffith and Hammond (1982) 132–33 (quotation from p. 133).

Homeric passage,[67] because of the parallels charted above,[68] but this interpretation ignores Bulloch's own deep appreciation of the traditional nature of these stories of impiety punished. He discusses, for instance, a similar speech, albeit less crass and violent, uttered by the captain of the pirates who seize and bind the young Dionysus in the seventh *Homeric Hymn*.[69] After the ropes fall from the god's hands and feet and the pious helmsman points out the signs of divinity in the boy (20: εἴκελος . . . θεοῖς), the captain chides him with what the narrator describes as a loathsome speech (25: στυγερῷ ἠνίπαπε μύθῳ) and tells him to get back to work, predicting (with a hint of violence) that in the end the boy will tell them the names of relatives who can pay his ransom (29–30: ἐς δὲ τελευτὴν . . . ἐρεῖ). In this case, however, Bulloch rightly denies that Callimachus is alluding to the seventh *Hymn* and argues instead that "this part of the Erysichthon story has a formal logic which Callimachus' audience will presumably have recognized as traditional and appropriate for such a cautionary tale, and which would thus have lent the narrative some degree of special religious effectiveness."[70] Bulloch thinks the Chryses episode also reflects this same formal logic and in his outline of these kinds of hymnic narratives, he helpfully calls the helmsman's pious comments or the spontaneous shout of the Achaean army to honor Chryses, as the "warning": that is, the natural response of pious individuals, when confronted with obvious signs of sacrality or divinity.[71] Herein lies the question, of course: did Callimachus, as an homage to Homer, model the whole story of Erysichthon's vicious attack on the disguised Demeter? Or did he find this traditional narrative in an Alexandrian collection of epichoric hymns and then create his own mimetic version, in which he, in his brief description of the priestess, acknowledges that a similar scene appears in *Iliad* 1? Bulloch's discussion of the traditional nature of these stories suggests, in fact, that Callimachus was working with a hymnic story that his readers

[67] E.g., Hopkinson (1984) 6 and 119, who calls them "verbal and situational parallels."

[68] Bulloch (1977) 103 discusses the parallel use of ἀρητήρ and ἀρατείρα and the use of στέμματα in both passages, as well as the similar diction in Agamemnon's threat (lines 1.28 and 32) and Erysichthon's (line 53), but he admits that these are not firm grounds for seeing specific reminiscences. But because Aristotle (*Poetics* 1457) singles out a contracted form of ἀρατείρα (ἀρατῆρα) as an example of a special poeticism, Bulloch suggests that Callimachus coined the form directly from Homer, even though it appears twice in Apollonius.

[69] Bulloch (1977) 99–101.

[70] Bulloch (1977) 100.

[71] Bulloch (1977) 100; the full sequence is "the Prize—the Offenders—the Attempt—the Warning—the Rejection—the Epiphany and Punishment." For a more elaborate scheme and a discussion of the sequence in the *Hymn to Dionysus*, see García (2002) 14–19.

would have instantly recognized, a traditional type that the Homeric poet deploys in *Iliad* 1 and that his audience would have also quickly recognized.

Similar scenarios in other, later narratives undiscussed by Bulloch confirm that the parallels between Agamemnon and Erysichthon probably arise from the shared generic features of local hymns, rather than direct imitation of Homer. A papyrus fragment of a hexameter hymn of late-Roman date is of special interest: it narrates the story of Dionysus' punishment of Lycurgus, a king who personally threatens and attacks the god and his nurses with an ox-goad (20).[72] The text ends, moreover, with a moral (56: "punishment is decreed for the men who fight the gods [*theomachoi*]") and then fragmentary instructions for worship on a given day each year. The instructions suggest that this composition was not some literary exercise, but rather a text designed to be performed in a specific cultic setting, perhaps in Mysia.[73] The papyrus hymn has, unfortunately, lost its beginning in a lacuna, so we lack the scene of Lycurgus' impiety and any speech he might have uttered. There are, however, good parallels with the hymns under discussion. Dionysus, for example, rescues Lycurgus' wife Kytis, as he did the pious helmsman, because she too had tried to stop her husband's impiety, albeit without success (42–45).[74] We are repeatedly told, moreover, of Dionysus' wrath (14: *mênima* and 26 and 48: *mênithmos*) and we are in a good position to reconstruct the king's sacrilege, thanks to the brief description of it in the *Iliad* (6.130-37):[75]

> οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ Δρύαντος υἱὸς κρατερὸς Λυκόοργος
> δὴν ἦν, ὅς ῥα θεοῖσιν ἐπουρανίοισιν ἔριζεν·
> ὅς ποτε μαινομένοιο Διωνύσοιο τιθήνας
> σεῦε κατ' ἠγάθεον Νυσήϊον· αἳ δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι
> θύσθλα χαμαὶ κατέχευαν ὑπ' ἀνδροφόνοιο Λυκούργου
> θεινόμεναι βουπλῆγι· Διώνυσος δὲ φοβηθεὶς
> δύσεθ' ἁλὸς κατὰ κῦμα, Θέτις δ' ὑπεδέξατο κόλπῳ
> δειδιότα· κρατερὸς γὰρ ἔχε τρόμος ἀνδρὸς ὁμοκλῆ.
>
> No, for not even the son of Dryas, mighty Lycurgus,
> lived long, he who strove with the heavenly gods;
> for he once drove the wet nurses of raving Dionysus
> headlong down the slope of sacred Mt. Nyseia and at once all of them

[72] Page (1942) 520–25 no. 129; Sutton (1987) gives a commentary and thorough discussion of the different versions of the story.

[73] Sutton (1987). More recently Zumbo (1997) and Furley (2007 and 2015) have suggested that the text was used in some kind of mystery cult. Furley (2015) 127 points out that, although the papyrus was found in Egypt and appears to be an autograph copy of the poet, the names of Lycurgus' wife and children have local connections with place names near Mt. Plakos in Anatolia.

[74] Stressed by Furley (2015) 127–34, who draws comparisons from Callimachus' *Hymn to Demeter*.

[75] For a fuller discussion of this scene in relation to some of the "Orphic" gold leaves, see Faraone (2011e and 2013a).

> let their wands fall to the ground, because they were stricken
> by the ox-goad of man-slaying Lycurgus, while Dionysus in terror
> dove into the wave of the sea and Thetis took him in her bosom,
> frightened, because a powerful trembling held him at the man's rebuke.

From this, therefore, our earliest version of the story, it seems that Lycurgus struck Dionysus' nurses with an ox-goad, while they were performing some kind of maenadic dance with their *thysthla*, a rare word usually interpreted as *thyrsoi*.[76] The Homeric summary ends, moreover, by mentioning Lycurgus' ὁμοκλή (6.137), a word that designates a verbal threat, reproof, or rebuke.[77] Thus here, again, a king reveals himself as *theomachos* in both his verbal abuse of and his personal violence against individuals who are distinctly marked as the devout worshippers of a deity.

Similarly outrageous behavior and speech appear in Euripides' *Bacchae*, where yet another king, Pentheus, mocks the god Dionysus, who is disguised but clearly marked as some kind of religious votary by his hair grown long for the god and by the *thyrsus* he carries (493–95).[78] Here Dionysus impersonates his own cult official, like Demeter in Callimachus' hymn, and thereby gives ample opportunity for the impiety of the "god-fighter" (*theomachos*) Pentheus,[79] who threatens him bodily in a manner that calls attention (as did Agamemnon) to these same two insignia, his *thyrsus* and long hair: "if I catch him within this palace, I will stop him from pounding the *thyrsus* and tossing his locks by severing his head from his body" (239–41).[80] Soon thereafter he commands his men to track Dionysus down and to bring him bound to the palace in order that he might be stoned to death (355–57). And, when

[76] Graziosi and Haubold (2010) ad *Il.* 6.134 note that the addition of the (dropped) *thysthla* in enjambment make it clear that Lycurgus is . . . engaged in an act of profanation." The papyrus hymn, on the other hand, has the nurses attack Lycurgus with their *thysthla* (line 20). It is a very rare word that the scholiasts to the Iliadic passage interpret as "branches," "grapevines," or "*thyrsoi*," i.e., the well-known Bacchic staff made of ivy leaves.

[77] Kamerbeek (1948) 281–82, suggests that Lycurgus' verbal abuse seems to have been a feature of Aeschylus' *Lycurgeia*, if we can trust Sophocles' brief mention of him as a mythological exemplum, who provoked the gods with "mockeries" (*Antigone* 962: κερτομίοις γλώσσαις). Kamerbeek also adduces Cadmus' description of Pentheus (Euripides *Bacchae* 1293), according to which Pentheus wanted to mock (ἐκερτόμει) the god and his bacchanals.

[78] Seaford (1996) ad loc. suggests that Pentheus is unaware of the religious role of the stranger's hair, but this seems unlikely, because earlier in the play (lines 239–41, which are discussed below) Pentheus once again pairs the long hair and *thyrsus* in a manner that suggests both have to do with religious devotion. He also makes a similar demand upon his grandfather Cadmus (253–54): "Will you not shake off the ivy (i.e., from your hair)? Will you not let your hand go free of the *thyrsus*?"

[79] This play is the first extant Greek text to use the verb *theomachein* "to fight with a god"; see lines 45, 325, and 1255 and Kamerbeek (1948) 278–79.

[80] Beheading was probably regarded as an especially gruesome or barbarian punishment; see Seaford (1996) ad loc., who cites a scholiast at *Iliad* 13.2, who describes decapitation as "savage and non-Greek."

the seer Tiresias dressed in Dionysiac regalia (248–51: including a *thyrsus*) plays the role of the "warner," who tries unsuccessfully to persuade Pentheus to recognize Dionysus as a god (266–327), Pentheus again responds impiously by commanding his men to destroy the holy spot from which Tiresias takes his omens and to "throw his fillets (350: στέμματα) to the winds and storms." Pentheus, in short, knows all too well the garb and implements of devout worshippers and seers, and he indeed makes them the special focus of his fury, rather than recognizing them as clear signs of devotion. Here, too, it is probable that Euripides self-consciously chose this story because of its cultic origins: an etiological tale of how the Thebans, after the horrible punishment of their impious king, establish the worship of Dionysus as one of the most important cults of their city. Thus it is no accident that nearly all of the choral songs in Euripides' *Bacchae* take the form of hymns, dithyrambs, or other kinds of ritual song addressed or dedicated to the god and that the chorus initially enters the theater armed with tambourines and other musical instruments used in cultic performances. In the first stasimon, for example, they describe Dionysus' double birth (88–103) and give an etiology for the tympanum, which they are drumming as they sing their hymn (120–25): "Oh lair of the Kouretes . . . , where the triple-crowned Korybantes invented for me this hide-stretched circle."[81] The plot of the play itself, of course, explains how Thebes became a center of Dionysiac worship and why the women of Thebes perform maenadic rites on the nearby slopes of Mt. Cithaeron.

There seem to be at least two ways to explain the parallels between all of these texts. One might once again invoke "Homeric hegemony" and conclude that the author of the Homeric *Hymn to Dionysus*, Euripides, Callimachus, and the anonymous author of the papyrus hymn to Dionysus all imitate *Iliad* 1 or imitate one of the earlier imitations. If, however, we stress the fact that three of the five passages are found in hymns and the fourth is in Euripides' extended homage to Dionysus, we can agree with Bulloch that these parallels underscore a "formal logic" shared by epichoric Greek hymns generally, but especially by hymns to gods like Demeter and Dionysus, who unlike most other gods are exceedingly close to mortals and often appear to them. In the Chryses episode, then, Agamemnon appears as the impious king, who, like Erysichthon and other famous *theomachoi*, puts his private desires first, and, despite obvious signs of Chryses' priestly status, threatens him with corporal harm. This characterization, as we have seen, is clearly shaped by the

[81] Translation by Seaford (1996) ad loc. with his notes.

conventions of local hymnic narratives, rather than those of Panhellenic epic. And, Agamemnon displays his impiety a second time when he rebukes the seer Calchas later in the episode, much as Pentheus does Tiresias.[82] This is in contrast to the rest of the poem, where Agamemnon, although he sometimes acts outrageously on the field of battle (as do most of the greatest heroes), never again acts impiously or selfishly places his own personal pleasures above the appropriate piety of a mortal.[83]

3.4 Other Embedded Hymns in Panhellenic Narratives

There are, in fact, several good archaic parallels for this process of embedding independent local hymns into longer Panhellenic narratives composed in the same hexametrical meter. The epichoric nature of these hymns is usually marked by references to local landmarks or families visited by the divinity[84] and by the often detailed descriptions of rituals—sometimes at newly built altars or temples—that seem to provide etiologies for rituals that were annually performed in the sanctuary. We find such an array of local details, for example, in the central Eleusinian section of the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* (90–300), which, as scholars since Wilamowitz have noticed, can be removed fairly easily from the Panhellenic story of the rape of Persephone without any real damage to the frame narrative: in short, there is no reason for Demeter to go to Eleusis, aside from the local tradition that once, during a famine, she came there in disguise, interacted with the local people and eventually told them where to build her a temple and how to perform her mysteries.[85] Before and after the Eleusinian narrative, however, there are no mortals and no specific topographic references, not even the name of the place from which Kore was abducted, which in other versions of the story is usually

[82] See lines 106–22, where Agamemnon glares evilly at the seer (105: κάκ' ὀσσόμενος), accuses him of being a "prophet of evil" (apparently a reference to the notorious oracle at Aulis about Iphigeneia), and then reiterates his selfish desire to keep the girl in his home, because he prefers her to Clytemnestra in shape, stature, wits, and handiworks (106–8).

[83] See note 59 above.

[84] García (2002) 16–27 discusses the five "recognition scenes" in the *Homeric Hymns*. We shall see below that three of them appear in embedded epichoric hymns.

[85] Wilamowitz (1959) 2.50, as translated by Clay (1989) 223: ". . . the Rape of Persephone and the Eleusis story are pieced together. As soon as one removes Eleusis a coherent connection emerges. . . ." See also Richardson (1974) 79 ("the visit to Eleusis has no narrative purpose"). The main complaint is that there is no reason for Demeter to go to Eleusis, because she already knows that her daughter has been abducted by Hades with the consent of Zeus; see Clay (1989) 223–24, who discusses all of the earlier scholarship.

associated closely with a local cult site.[86] The Eleusinian episode is also the only part of the hymn that contains scenes of etiological significance for the rituals performed annually at Eleusis, especially the various actions undertaken by the disguised goddess during her stay: she wears a dark robe with her head covered, she sits on a stool, and she refuses to drink wine and eventually drinks a special barley drink called the *kykeon*.[87] The Eleusis episode ends, moreover, with an epiphany and precise instructions from the goddess herself (lines 268–74):

> I am Demeter the honored one, who is the greatest boon and joy to immortals and mortals. Now, let the whole people build me a great temple with an altar below it, under the citadel's sheer wall, above Kallichoron, where the hill juts out. As to the rites, I myself will instruct you on how in the future you can propitiate me with holy performance.

Here, too, we should note the local landmarks—the city wall and the Kallichoron Well located "where the hill juts out."

Commentators have long thought that the first "Hymn to the Muses" at the start of Hesiod's *Theogony* (1–34) was also composed originally as a separate epichoric hymn, because it identifies the Muses as "Heliconian" and carefully describes the local landmarks on Mt. Helicon (*Th.* 1–7):[88]

> Μουσάων Ἑλικωνιάδων ἀρχώμεθ᾽ ἀείδειν,
> αἵ θ᾽ Ἑλικῶνος ἔχουσιν ὄρος μέγα τε ζάθεόν τε,
> καί τε περὶ κρήνην ἰοειδέα πόσσ᾽ ἁπαλοῖσιν
> ὀρχεῦνται καὶ βωμὸν ἐρισθενέος Κρονίωνος·
> καί τε λοεσσάμεναι τέρενα χρόα Περμησσοῖο
> ἢ Ἵππου κρήνης ἢ Ὀλμειοῦ ζαθέοιο
> ἀκροτάτῳ Ἑλικῶνι χοροὺς ἐνεποιήσαντο, . . .
>
> Let us begin to sing from the Heliconian Muses, who possess the great and holy mountain of Helicon, and dance on their soft feet around the violet-dark

[86] In the Homeric *Hymn* it is called Nysa (17), which seems to be a mythical place associated with Dionysus; see Foley (1994) 36 (a "vague and mystical setting") and Richardson (1974) 148–49, who notes that the presence of the Oceanids in the maiden's retinue suggests a place at the ends of the earth.

[87] West (2003) 7 sums up the standard view that the Demeter hymn is "the Mysteries' foundation myth," an opinion that has, however, been strongly challenged by Clinton (1986); for a defense of the hymn's etiologies, see Parker (1991) and Richardson (2011a) 50–53. For the argument here, it suffices to say that the hymn refers to Eleusinian rituals of one sort or another.

[88] Friedländer (1914); Böhme (1937) 44–61; Minton (1970) 358 (an "opening hymn to Hesiod's native Muses of Helicon" followed by a "hymn to the Olympian Muses"); Lamberton (1988) 499, who notes that Hesiodic scholars in the Hellenistic and Roman period suspected its authenticity; Clay (2003) 49–50 and Pucci (2007). Mondi (1984) 336–37 suggests that the *Theogony* preserves faint signs of other epichoric hymns from "sites of cultic importance," for example, to the Zeus worshipped at Lyktos and Mt. Algaion and to the Aphrodite worshipped on Cythera and Cyprus.

> fountain and the altar of Cronus' mighty son. And after they have washed their tender skin in Permessus or Hippocrene or holy Olmeius, they perform choral dances on highest Helicon. . . .

Some scholars have even argued plausibly that this initial hymn was composed for a local performance in a sanctuary of the Muses on or near Mt. Helicon in Boeotia,[89] and one could press this idea even further to suggest that the fountain and altar of Zeus around which the Muses sing and dance was the same place where local maidens danced during annual festivals for the goddesses. And like the Eleusinian episode in the *Hymn to Demeter*, these verses mention by name various local springs or streams: the Permessus, the Hippocrene ("Horse-Fountain"), and the Olmeius.[90] Another important feature of an epichoric hymn is a divine epiphany, just as we saw in the Homeric and Callimachean hymns to Demeter, where the goddess, initially in disguise, appears to mortals. In the *Theogony*, the Heliconian Muses upbraid the shepherd Hesiod, give him a staff of laurel, and breathe a divine voice into him (22–34). But after this scene of poetic inspiration, the Muses move on to Olympus to sing for their father, Zeus, in his palace, and there is a clear break with a new beginning: hereafter, in the poem, there is no more human contact, and the Muses have crossed the boundary, it seems, between epichoric divinities, who live close by mortals and are focused on local cult sites, and the more abstract Panhellenic gods, who are living on Olympus.[91]

I suggest that there are two more cases of embedded local hymns in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*. The first is uncontroversial, because a majority of scholars think that the Delian section (lines 1–181) was originally an independent hymn composed for performance on Delos, although there is little agreement on how it became attached to the Delphic narrative and which narrative was composed first: most separatists follow the lead of Wilamowitz

[89] West (1966) ad loc. and Lamberton (1988) 499 and 503, who in a discussion of the introductions to both the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days*, notes that if they are deleted, along with the famous seafaring passage in the latter (639–40), all mention of Hesiod and all local references to Boeotia disappear.

[90] Clay (2003) 54 suggests that the places where the Muses dance are on a summit inaccessible to human worshippers, but the presence of the altar (4: βωμὸν) to Zeus suggests otherwise; the oddity remains, however, that the Muses are imagined as both the worshippers of Zeus and his daughters.

[91] Minton (1970) 368 ("The Heliconian Muses are the deities of song as Hesiod felt their immediate presence . . . the Olympian Muses of the next hymn are . . . of the larger epic tradition and Homer, with whom he tries to identify his native deities"). For the equation of the "Olympian" and the "Pan-Hellenic," see Nagy (1982) 48–49; Clay (1989) 9–11; and Nagy (1990). Most recently, see Nagy (1992b) 57 ("We see here the transformation of the Muses from local goddesses of Mount Helikon into the Pan-hellenic goddesses on Mount Olympus") and Clay (2003) 57: "the change of the Muses' name—from Heliconian to Olympian—underlines the movement from a localized, epichoric perspective, to a Panhellenic one."

in thinking that the Delphic section was composed later as an addition to and in imitation of the Delian.[92] Beginning in the 1980s, however, some scholars suggested that the poem was composed in a single moment by a master poet, who was self-consciously Panhellenic and composed a poem that could embrace two of Apollo's most important sanctuaries and could have been performed at either of them.[93] In the end, there are good grounds for saying that the separatists and the unitarians are both right: the Delian hymn undeniably has the earmarks of an earlier, local or regional composition, and it was embedded by an extremely talented poet in a much longer, narrative poem of Panhellenic ambitions.[94] Much of the disagreement arises, I suggest, from the fact that both sides fail to acknowledge the difference between a short, local hymn used in ritual contexts and longer narrative hymns with a Panhellenic focus that were performed competitively in the same sanctuaries,[95] a failure that encourages them to imagine that the *Hymn to Apollo* was created by merging the two Homeric or rhapsodic traditions. The Delian episode, in fact, provides yet another strong case for the incorporation of an epichoric hymn into a longer hexameter narrative, because it retains all of the features of a local hymn: the invocations to Leto (14–18), who is undeniably the protagonist of the birth story, and then Apollo (15–44); the birth narrative proper (45–164); and the final envoi to Leto and Apollo (164–78), which ends with a promise for future song: "And myself, I shall not cease from hymning the far-shooter Apollo of the silver bow, whom lovely-haired Leto bore." And then, like Calchas in the Chryses episode, Leto disappears entirely from the poem. Finally, like all of the embedded hymns discussed above, this Delian hymn describes the regional Ionic sanctuary in great detail (146–55): "But it is in Delos, Phoebos, that your heart most delights, where the Ionians with trailing robes assemble with their children and wives on your avenue, and when they have seated the gathering they think of you and entertain you with boxing, dancing, and singing . . . the spectacle of the men and the fair-girt women, the swift ships and the people's piles of belongings."

[92] Wilamowitz (1916) 440–62. For full summary of the debates with full bibliography, see most recently Faulkner (2011) 20–22 and Chappell (2011). West (1975a) holds the minority view that the Delian section was composed later as an addition to and in imitation of the Delphic, a poem that both he and Burkert (1979a) suggest was composed by the poet Cynaethus in 523 BCE for a special Delian festival organized by the tyrant Polycrates; this idea was defended most recently in West (1999) 369–72. Petrovic (2013) 217–25 offers a novel way to explain the troubling lines 177–78 as a case of purposeful "false closure."

[93] Thalmann (1984) 64–73; Miller (1986); and especially Clay (1989) 9–11 and 47–49.

[94] See, e.g., Faulkner (2011) 20: "Even if the *[Hymn to] Apollo* is a composite of separate hymns, the poem as we have it has clearly been arranged to be read as a unity."

[95] For a festival as the likely venue for the performance of Homeric hymns, see Nagy (2011) 282–84.

The debate about the Delian episode has gone on for more than a century, but until recently scholars have been slow to see that another, albeit even shorter, local hymn has been absorbed as the final episode of the *Hymn to Apollo*,[96] when the god in the guise of a dolphin forces a boatload of Cretan sailors to land on the shore of the city of Crisa and then commands them to perform a series of ritual actions:[97] (i) erect a seaside altar to himself as Apollo Delphinios, (ii) perform an odd kind of vegetarian sacrifice on it, and then (iii) sing and dance a special kind of Cretan paean, while marching up the hill to the god's newly built oracle at Delphi. We have been slow to recognize the hymnic origins of this episode, in part because a crucial bit of archaeological evidence appeared only recently and in an unlikely place: the ongoing excavations of the sanctuary of Apollo Delphinios in Miletus.[98] Indeed, we now know that in Miletus an altar of Apollo Delphinios was erected (as in the hymn) directly upon a sandy beach beside a harbor and that this altar was probably the focus (as in the hymn) of some kind of sacrificial ritual, before the annual procession by the Molpoi to another famous Panhellenic oracle, that of Apollo at Didyma.[99] The Molpoi, moreover, were grown men who sang paeans along the way to Didyma, much like the Cretan sailors on their way to Delphi.[100]

In the hymn, it is Apollo himself, like Demeter at Eleusis, who instructs the Cretans (490–501):

καὶ βωμὸν ποιήσατ᾽ ἐπὶ ῥηγμῖνι θαλάσσης·
πῦρ <δ᾽> ἐπικαίοντες ἐπί τ᾽ ἄλφιτα λευκὰ θύοντες
εὔχεσθαι δἤπειτα παριστάμενοι περὶ βωμόν.
ὡς μὲν ἐγὼ τὸ πρῶτον ἐν ἠεροειδέϊ πόντωι
εἰδόμενος δελφῖνι θοῆς ἐπὶ νηὸς ὄρουσα,
ὣς ἐμοὶ εὔχεσθαι Δελφινίωι· αὐτὰρ ὁ βωμός
αὐτὸς Δέλφειος καὶ ἐπόψιος ἔσσεται αἰεί.
δειπνῆσαί τ᾽ ἄρ᾽ ἔπειτα θοῆι παρὰ νηῒ μελαίνηι,
καὶ σπεῖσαι μακάρεσσι θεοῖς οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσιν.
αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν σίτοιο μελίφρονος ἐξ ἔρον ἧσθε,
ἔρχεσθαί θ᾽ ἅμ᾽ ἐμοὶ καὶ ἰηπαιήον᾽ ἀείδειν,
εἰς ὅ κε χῶρον ἵκησθον, ἵν᾽ ἔξετε πίονα νηόν.

[96] See also Richardson (2010) 9–13, who suggests that the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* can be divided into three nearly equal parts. Along the similar lines see as early as Wade-Gery (1936) 18–19, who likewise isolated nearly the same lines as an originally independent composition, which he called the "Dolphin Song."

[97] An earlier version of this discussion of the Crisan hymn appeared as Faraone (2018a).

[98] See Herda (2005) and (2011), building on the earlier work of Graf (1979) and others.

[99] For a recent summary of the procession of the Molpoi, see Georgoudi (2001).

[100] See Herda (2005) and (2011) and Faraone (2018a) for the close parallels between the Delphinios altars in Miletus and Crisa and the paeanic processions from these altars to Didyma and Delphi.

> Build an altar by the breakers of the sea
> and lighting a fire burn white barley upon it
> and then, standing around the altar, pray.
> And just as I indeed first in the misty sea
> in the form of a dolphin leapt upon your swift ship,
> so, too, pray to me as "Delphinios." And the altar
> itself will be "Delphinios"[101] and will always be notable.
> Then take your dinner by the side of your swift, black ship
> and pour libations to the blessed gods who inhabit Olympus.
> And, whenever you have set aside your desire for heart-pleasing grain,
> come at the same time with me and sing "Ie Paieon,"
> until you arrive at the place where you will take control of a rich temple.

The focus here on a sacrifice and meal limited solely to grain seems to reflect a form of thanksgiving sacrifice that sailors made when they arrived safely on land, something the Cretans would have naturally done after their long journey. But here the sacrifice is commanded by Apollo, who (as we shall see in the next chapter) often gave hexametrical instructions on where to inaugurate new sanctuaries and what to sacrifice in them. But regardless of their origin, because these commands are entirely unmotivated by the wider Panhellenic narrative, we must see them as vestiges of a hymn originally sung at Crisa, a hymn that explained, moreover, why the altar was there on the shore and why they sacrificed barley on it to Apollo Delphinios.

The Cretans do as they are told, and after a description of the sacrifice and meal that precisely mirrors Apollo's instructions, we are given an even more detailed account of the special kind of marching paean that they perform (513–19):

> αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο,
> βάν ῥ' ἴμεν· ἦρχε δ' ἄρά σφιν ἄναξ Διὸς υἱὸς Ἀπόλλων
> φόρμιγγ' ἐν χείρεσσιν ἔχων, ἐρατὸν κιθαρίζων,
> καλὰ καὶ ὕψι βιβάς· οἳ δὲ ῥήσσοντες ἕποντο
> Κρῆτες πρὸς Πυθὼ καὶ ἰηπαιήον' ἄειδον
> οἷοί τε Κρητῶν παιήονες, οἷσί τε Μοῦσα
> ἐν στήθεσσιν ἔθηκε θεὰ μελίγηρυν ἀοιδήν.
>
> And when they had satisfied their appetite for eating and drinking,
> they went on their way. And Lord Apollo, the son of Zeus, led them
> with a lyre in his hands playing a lovely strain, stepping gracefully
> and high. And they stamping their feet followed,
> Cretans to Pytho and they sang "ie Paean" after the manner
> of Cretan paean-singers, for whom the Muse,
> a goddess, placed honey-sweet song in their breasts.

[101] Following Richardson (2010) loc. cit. against the traditional support of Allen et al. (n. 8) loc. cit. and others for the manuscript reading "Delpheios."

As in the case of the youthful paean-singing at Chryse, the Cretans begin to sing and dance after the sacrifice, but there is no confusion about their age and no surprise about their song.[102] Their processional paean is, however, quite different from the one performed at Chryse: the sailors stamp their feet and march from the seaside altar to the oracular sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi.[103] In both *Iliad* 1 and the *Hymn to Apollo*, the descriptions of these local rituals appear at or near the end of the embedded hymn, where they, like the detailed instructions of Demeter to the Eleusinians, were presumably etiological, at least originally. This etiology is explicit in the *Hymn to Apollo*, where the god's instructions to the Cretan sailors are designed to explain and claim a divine source for the seaside cult of Apollo Delphinios, for the processional paean, and for the first priesthood at Delphi.

3.5 Summary

The Chryses episode in the first book of the *Iliad* contains, then, a number of generic features usually associated with the narratives and cult etiologies that we find in epichoric hymns, but almost never in epic war narratives. The topographical details contained in the episode, moreover, make it possible to identify its source as a traditional hexametrical hymn composed originally for performance at the local sanctuary at Chryse—a *Hymn to Sminthean Apollo*, if you will. But at this point, we should ask the most important question: what dramatic or poetic benefit did the *Iliad* poet derive by beginning his monumental *Iliad* in such a hymnic key? The main benefit, as Bulloch saw, is the moral focus of some of these hymns on the punishment of impiety and on how individuals react differently, when faced with the epiphany of a god or the presence of their cultic personnel. We saw, for example, how the characterization of Agamemnon in the Chryses episode does indeed create a strong moral bias against the king from the very start of the poem, as well as some initial sympathy for Achilles, who for the moment at least appears as a pious and extraordinary young man. He is, in some ways, a half-divine version of Apollo himself, an idea that gets expressed, as we have also seen, in the way the vulgate proem interweaves the fury of both. The strong

[102] When Apollo (and we) first catch sight of them in their ship, these Cretans are described as grown men (392: ἄνδρες) and they perform a song and dance that had been explicitly demanded a little earlier—as we saw above—by Apollo himself (490–501).

[103] Faraone (2018a).

first impressions established by the Chryse episode do not last, of course. Agamemnon continues to struggle as commander, but never again commits such gross impiety, whereas Achilles, especially in his rage after the death of Patroclus, notoriously fights against the gods, kills suppliants, and refuses burial to his enemies. Nonetheless, the poet, by pitching the opening scenes of the *Iliad* in such a hymnic manner, sets up the ensuing conflict between the *theomachos* Agamemnon and the "warner" Achilles in such black-and-white terms that the audience is irrevocably partisan to the latter despite his subsequently monstrous behavior.

In the process of discussing the Chryses episode, we have also discovered a wider pattern in which the Hesiodic *Theogony* and a few of the Homeric *Hymns* also embed epichoric hymns but do so for different reasons. It is of great interest, moreover, that the Delian, Heliconian, and Chryses episodes were all embedded at the very beginning of a longer narrative, a position that suggests they might have all been originally composed as preludes to the longer Panhellenic compositions in which they now appear.[104] In the case of the embedded Delian and Crisaean episodes, however, it seems that the composer of the *Hymn to Apollo* created a more complicated hymn with a tripartite structure that praises Leto or Apollo as the founders of cultic activities in three different places: Delos, where Leto chooses to give birth to the god; Crisa, where Apollo has an altar built and inaugurates sacrifices; and the oracular sanctuary at Delphi, for which he arranges his priesthood and has a temple built.[105] Since the hymn ends with Apollo and his new priests at Delphi, we should probably imagine that the extant *Hymn to Apollo* was designed to be performed at Delphi and reflects local ambitions to be recognized as the most important Panhellenic sanctuary for Apollo.

And what, finally, can we glean from this chapter about the genre of epichoric hymns performed in dactylic hexameters? They seem to differ from the more literary Homeric or rhapsodic hymns in a number of ways. They are filled, as we saw, with references to local topographical features and sanctuaries and they usually provide explanations for various forms of cult performed there, as well as for cultic buildings and personnel. They also seem to favor myths in which mortals interact with gods, sometimes in a

[104] See, e.g., Minton, quoted earlier in note 91, and Furley (2011) 210–12, who suggests that the hymn to the Muses at the start of the Hesiodic *Theogony* changed its status "from a *prooimion* with separate subject matter . . . to a subordinate part of the main endeavor: a long hexameter narrative poem whose subject is the genealogy of the gods."

[105] Richardson (2010) 9–13 and Faraone (2018a).

positive manner, for example, when Hesiod is inspired to become a poet or when the Cretan priests become priests at Apollo's Delphic sanctuary. But more often these myths narrate the impious and even violent actions of men in positions of power, such as kings and princes, who mistreat disguised gods or their votaries and tragically pay the price. The relatively short length of these embedded hymns is also quite telling: the Hesiodic "Hymn to the Heliconian Muses" runs to thirty-four lines; the Delian episode to 178; the Crisaean episode to 158, and the Eleusinian episode to 214. If we ignore *Iliad* 1.118–430a, which describes the mounting hostility between Agamemnon and Achilles and Achilles' conversation with his mother, the Chryses episode is roughly 176 verses long. Not by chance, I suggest, the three mimetic hymns of Callimachus run to similar lengths, are keyed to a specific cult site, and provide similar etiological myths for the foundation of a local temple or ritual: his *Hymn to Apollo* is 113 verses long and primarily concerned with the worship of Apollo Carneius at the poet's hometown Cyrene, the foundation of the god's sanctuary and bull sacrifice, and the feast of the Carneia festival; the *Bath of Pallas* is 142 lines long, is concerned entirely with the local cult of Athena at Argos, the procession of female votaries down to the river Inachus, and the annual washing of Athena's statue there; and the *Hymn to Demeter,* which is 138 verses long, is probably concerned with Demeter Thesmophoros and the procession of the ritual basket (*kalathos*), in this case on a wagon drawn by four white horses. The hymns to Athena and Demeter, moreover, tell tragic stories of human error (Tiresias accidently sees Athena bathe) or defiance (Erysichthon attempts to cut down Demeter's grove) and the punishment that ensues, very much like, the story of Agamamnon's error in the first book of the *Iliad*.

4

Circe's Instructions as a Sibylline Oracle

In the tenth book of the *Odyssey* Circe gives Odysseus detailed instructions for finding the entrance to Hades and for performing the necessary necromantic rituals to encourage Tiresias to emerge from Hades and speak.[1] Until recently these verses have not attracted much comment, aside from a handful of scholars, who have drawn attention to the parallels between Circe's speech and those dactylic hexameters inscribed on the late-classical "Orphic" gold leaves, which offer advice to someone who is about to visit the underworld.[2] Martin has shown, for example, that Circe's speech and the gold tablets illustrate a "speech type-scene" concerned with directions and instructions ("map" and "script") and that this type-scene appears elsewhere in the *Odyssey* at those points where one person with access to privileged information gives advice to another, who will soon enter a potentially hostile place, for example, the advice that Nausicaa gives to Odysseus on how best to approach the palace of Alcinoos ("map") and what to do or say once he is there ("script").[3]

Such a reading of Circe's speech fits in well with the modern understanding of the gold leaves, which identifies the author of these verses as none other than "Orpheus" himself, who according to legend had visited the underworld and was therefore in the best position to give reliable advice on its topography and etiquette.[4] And since Orpheus was a renowned composer of hexameters, this approach also helps explain why the texts inscribed on the gold tablets are usually in this same meter. On the other hand, Edmonds has rightly stressed that the rhetorical form of these gold tablets, with their mix of instruction and prediction, more closely resembles that of the hexametrical oracles of the archaic and classical periods,[5] and there is an additional difficulty: unlike the gold tablets, Circe does not, in fact, advise Odysseus about

[1] For an earlier version of the framing argument about Circe, see Faraone (2019a).
[2] For an introductory discussion of these texts, see Section 1.1 above.
[3] Circe tells Odysseus (i) where to find the entrance to Hades ("map") and (ii) what rituals to do and what words to say ("script"), after he gets there (*Odyssey* 10.507–40); see Martin (2007) 6.
[4] For bibliography see Section 1.3 above.
[5] Edmonds (2011a).

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the *interior* of the underworld or what to do once he is inside, but only how to arrive near the entrance and get the ghost of Tiresias to emerge from it.[6] In what follows, then, I combine and extend the approaches of Martin and Edmonds, by arguing that Circe's speech, and those of some other characters in the *Odyssey*, provide us with our earliest extant evidence for the traditional Greek genre of oracular hexameters and that the instructions of Circe, in particular, reflect the content and form of the "colonization oracle," a sub-genre that was popular in the archaic period during the high tide of Greek colonial expeditions to the Black Sea, North Africa, and Italy.[7]

Oracles are, of course, relatively short, hexametrical texts that form a coherent and independent corpus of their own, albeit sharing some features with the Hesiodic corpora.[8] They were famously composed orally at Delphi by a series of female poets known as the "Pythia,"[9] and we know from the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, and especially from parodies in the comic plays of Aristophanes,[10] that hexametrical oracles of similar diction and syntax were uttered in archaic and classical times by two kinds of itinerant prophets: men, who in mainland Greece often composed under the name of "Bakis," and women called "Sibyls," who are first attested along the

[6] What, in fact, happens after Odysseus gets there in Book 11 is not entirely clear. Some suggest that the *Odyssey* poet transforms an original scene of necromancy (as Circe instructed) into an unexpected *katabasis*; see, e.g., Kirk (1962) 236–39. More recently, however, scholars have come to see more complexity. Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) 75–77, for example, after noting how Merkelbach, Kirk, and others argued that "an older *nekromanteia* has been conflated with the poetic conception of a heroic *katabasis,*" suggest, to the contrary, that "[w]hen Odysseus comes into contact with the hosts of the dead, the emphasis shifts from necromancy to . . . the concept that lies behind the Attic-Ionian Anthesteria, in which the souls of the dead are believed to intermingle with the living." According to this model, then, Odysseus does not go into the underworld, but the ghosts leave the underworld and come to him.

[7] For the generic features of hexametrical oracles, see Fontenrose (1978) and for the colonization oracle, see Pease (1917); Dougherty (1992); Suárez de la Torre (1994a); and Malkin (2000).

[8] See, e.g., Maurizio (1997) 309; Martin (2007) 25 ("the hexametrical oracle tradition forms a coherent corpus and, most importantly, one that is independent of Homeric verse in diction and technique"); Giangiulio (2010) 416–19; and Gagné (2013) 98 ("On attribue un poème à la Pythie comme on attribue un poème à Orphée . . . La Pythie est une *persona*, pas une personne"). But see also the important earlier works of McLeod (1961); Rossi (1981); and Fernández Delgado (1986), who argue for some crossover between the Hesiodic corpus and oracles.

[9] The pioneering article is McLeod (1961), and more recently Dobson (1979); Price (1985); Maurizio (1997); and Flower (2008) 215–22, who rightly critiques Bowden (2003) and (2005) 33–38, for his assertion that it is "highly improbable that an uneducated woman would be able to extemporize verses in hexameters," ignoring the earliest evidence of Herodotus, in favor of the later accounts of Strabo 9.3.5 and Plutarch *Mor.* 407b–c, according to which the Pythia was a simpleton, whose ravings were "translated" by male interpreters. See also Fontenrose (1978) 195, who agrees that "traditional oracles are a genre of poetry . . . and the pronouncement of seers, who were also poets," and who thinks that such compositions of itinerant prophets like Bakis were eventually and incorrectly attached to Apollo at Delphi and Didyma; Gainsford (2015) 29 agrees: "it is likely, but improvable that many famous oracles supposedly from Delphi actually came from oracle collections."

[10] See now the recent and thorough study of Platter (2007) 108–42.

Aegean coast of Anatolia.[11] The oracular quality of Circe's speech has not previously been recognized, I suggest, because modern readers, who first encounter Greek oracles in Herodotus and Greek tragedy, expect oracular speech to be primarily concerned with the prediction of future events, when in fact a great number of oracles are simply instructions, often about how to perform complicated libations and sacrifices. And this is precisely what we find in Circe's instructions to Odysseus, which are twenty verses in length: the first five tell him how to find the entrance to Hades and the next twelve how to perform the necessary rituals to bring the ghost of Tiresias up from Hades. Only the last three verses contain future verbs, when Circe assures him that the dead, and especially Tiresias, *will* come from Hades, but only after the complicated rites are finished. But once we have realized that the poet has cast Circe herself in a prophetic role, the appearance of Tiresias becomes a bit of a puzzle, in part because elsewhere he has no role at all in the Trojan cycle of epic poems and he belongs, in fact, to that other great cycle of epic poems, those about Thebes. I shall suggest that by doubling these prophetic scenes in the *Odyssey*, the poet seeks to contrast the limited prophecy of a local, female Sibyl with the sweeping vision of a Panhellenic prophet from another epic cycle, who can predict the end of the poem and even what happens afterwards.

The proposed argument may at first glance seem weak on chronological grounds, because the earliest extant hexametrical oracles are preserved much later in Herodotus' report of the prophecies given to Croesus, the early-sixth-century king of Lydia, or in even later authors, like Diodorus Siculus and Pausanias, who produce verse oracles from the seventh century concerned with the foundation of new cities in the West, for example, Syracuse or Gela.[12] But, in fact, the Homeric hymns reflect clear knowledge of the performance of oracles at Delphi. In the *Hymn to Apollo*, for example, we saw in the previous chapter how Apollo gives advice to the Cretan sailors that reflects the language of oracular hexameters,[13] and in the *Hymn to Hermes* the typical

[11] There is an important tradition that after the dismemberment of Orpheus, the head was carried by a river into the Aegean and eventually washed up on Lesbos, where it continued to sing hexameters that were oracular; for discussion, see Faraone (2004c).

[12] P&W nos. 2–3.

[13] After Apollo shows the Cretan sailors the new Delphic temple and sanctuary, their leader worriedly notes the poor quality of the land and asks, "How, even now, will we feed ourselves?" Apollo responds first by rejecting and rephrasing their question, an oracular move discussed earlier, and then by assuring them that they will slaughter sheep in abundance brought by the people who visit his oracle (531–37). Here scholars have suggested, e.g., Clay (1989) 84–85, that the poet presents the very first oracular inquiry at Delphi and the god's very first hexametrical response. We saw earlier in

language of an oracular response is put into the mouth of Hermes, albeit in a parodic manner, when he is arguing with Apollo.[14] Most importantly for the argument at hand, however, is the fact that the poet of the *Odyssey* himself clearly knows about oracular inquiries and their responses at Delphi: the blind singer Demodocus, while describing a quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles (8.75–81), notes that "Phoebus Apollo, in giving his response" (χρείων . . . Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων) had predicted this dispute to Agamemnon "in sacred Pytho, when he passed the threshold of stone in order to enquire of the oracle" (Πυθοῖ ἐν ἠγαθέῃ, ὅθ᾽ ὑπέρβη λάινον οὐδὸν χρησόμενος).[15] Here, the vocabulary of inquiry and response is typical of later reports of oracular consultations and raises an additional question: did the *Odyssey* poet imagine that the oracle given to Agamemnon was performed in dactylic hexameters? We cannot tell from these few lines in the *Odyssey*, but this will, in fact, be the central focus of this chapter: the idea that Homeric poets were familiar with the genre of hexametrical oracles and could use this generic form to further their narrative or dramatic goals.[16]

The argument proceeds in five stages: in the first two, I offer a close reading of the two parts of Circe's advice to Odysseus: the "map" that gets him to the entrance of Hades and the "script" for the necromantic rites. In the third section, we shall compare Circe's advice with that offered to the initiate in the "Orphic" gold tablets and to Odysseus by Nausicaa in *Odyssey* 6, with the aim of distinguishing between Martin's more general category of the "speech genre" of instruction and the subcategory of oracular advice in dactylic hexameters. In the fourth section we shall examine, as well, the prophetic speeches of Tiresias in *Odyssey* 11 and of Eidotheia and Proteus in *Odyssey* 4, in order to show how the the poet, by doubling the prophetic scenes in both places, seems to diminish the authority of the local female speaker, in order to get the more panoramic

Section 3.4 above the oracular quality of Apollo's instructions to the Cretan sailors about where to build a seaside altar for Delphinios and what to sacrifice to him.

[14] For example, at lines 462–63, where Hermes uses the expressions αὐτὰρ ἐγώ σοι and οὔ τι μεγαίρω, for which see Dobson (1979) and Fernández Delgado (1990) 214–17 ("typisch für die Antworten des Orakels").

[15] West (2014) 192 notes that this oracle was "the only one of Delphic provenance in early epic outside of the Theban cycle."

[16] The embedded tales of the *Odyssey* also attribute oracles to fairy-tale monarchs and monsters. Alcinoos, for example, notes (*Odyssey* 13.172–83) that the oracles (*thesphata*) that his father "uttered long ago" were now coming true in his own time, and even the savage Cyclopes had a seer (*mantis*) named Telemus, son of Eurymus, who apparently "excelled all in prophecy (*mantosunê*) and grew old among the Cyclopes as a prophet"; it was he, in fact, who predicted that Polyphemus would be blinded by Odysseus (9.506–12).

and indeed Panhellenic viewpoints of Proteus, who travels the seas widely, or the dead Tiresias, who also has far greater knowledge of the human world thanks to his position in the underworld, where the freshly dead arrive daily with news from many places. In the final section, I turn to the Erythraean Sibyl and suggest that she and the hexametrical oracles attributed to her were the most likely local models for Circe and her instructions to Odysseus.

4.1 A Map for Finding Hades

Odysseus begins his consultation with Circe by asking a significant question (510): "Who will guide us (ἡγεμονεύσει) on this journey?[17] For no man yet ever arrived at Hades with his black ship." She dismisses his anxious question and tells him not to worry (504–7):[18]

> διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,
> μή τί τοι ἡγεμόνος γε ποθὴ παρὰ νηῒ μελέσθω·
> ἱστὸν δὲ στήσας ἀνά θ' ἱστία λευκὰ πετάσσας
> ἧσθαι· τὴν δέ κέ τοι πνοιὴ βορέαο φέρῃσιν.
>
> O son of Laertes, sprung from Zeus, Odysseus of the many wiles,
> be not concerned about a guide (*hêgemôn*) for your ship.
> Set up your mast, spread your white sails
> and take a seat, for the breath of the North Wind will carry it (i.e., the ship) for you.

These verses are similar to the beginnings of a number of extant oracles, whose form and syntax have been studied closely by Fontenrose, who noted, for example, that a full salutation spanning an entire hexametrical line was common in the initial greetings of a number of extant oracles, for example, "Carystus, dear son of much renowned Chiron," "Lycurgus, dear to Zeus and all who have their dwellings in Olympus," or "Blessed is this man, . . . Cypselus, son of Eetion, king of renowned Corinth."[19] Circe's initial restatement of Odysseus' question about the *hêgemôn* recalls, moreover, the brief recapitulations that sometimes appear at the start of hexametrical oracles.[20] In some cases Apollo, like Circe, even rejects the premise of the

[17] For a longer and more detailed version of Sections 4.1–4.2, see Faraone (2019a).

[18] All translations of the *Odyssey* are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

[19] Carystus (P&W no. 228.1); Lycurgus (no. 29.2); and Cypselus (no. 2.1); see also "Hesiod, honored by the immortal Muses" (no. 206.2) and "Lydian offspring, king of many, greatly foolish Croesus" (no. 55.1).

[20] For restatement of the request in the first line (usually with the verbs αἰτεῖς or δίζεαι), see, e.g., in *Palatine Anthology* 6.67.1, an oracle given to Oedipus' father ("you request a blessed race of

question itself, for example, at the start of an oracle given to some Spartan helots wishing to settle Sicyon:[21] "Beautiful indeed is the plain between Corinth and Sicyon, *but you will not inhabit it*, not even if you are fully armed in bronze!" Here Apollo refers to the helots' question ("Shall we inhabit Sicyon?"), but then refutes it entirely,[22] just as he does with King Battus of Thera, who came to Delphi about his stammering:[23] "You came, Battus, on account of your speech, but Phoebus Apollo sends you to sheep-rearing Libya as the leader of a colonial expedition." As we shall see below, Odysseus' initial concern about a guide (*hêgemôn*) also reflects a number of early oracles that predict how, upon their arrival on a strange new shore, colonists will indeed find a local *hêgemôn*, usually in the form of a special animal, for example, a pure white sow or a cow marked with a crescent moon, that will guide them to the precise location for their new city.[24]

Circe's instructions begin in earnest at lines 508–12, where she provides Odysseus with a "map" for his journey to Hades:

> ἀλλ' ὁπότ' ἄν δὴ νηῒ δι' Ὠκεανοῖο περήσῃς,
> ἔνθ' ἀκτή τε λάχεια καὶ ἄλσεα Περσεφονείης
> μακραί τ' αἴγειροι καὶ ἰτέαι ὠλεσίκαρποι,
> νῆα μὲν αὐτοῦ κέλσαι ἐπ' Ὠκεανῷ βαθυδίνῃ,
> αὐτὸς δ' εἰς Ἀΐδεω ἰέναι δόμον εὐρώεντα.
>
> But whenever indeed you cross through the Ocean with your ship,
> where there is a rough headland and the groves of Persephone—
> tall poplars and willows that cast their fruit—
> (i.e., then) beach your ship by the deep-swirling Ocean,
> and you yourself go to the dank house of Hades.

children . . .") or Lucian *Alex*. 50, given to a cuckold ("you seek to know who is secretly lying with your wife . . ."). See Fontenrose (1978) 177–78 for discussion.

[21] Diodorus Siculus 8.21.3 = P&W no. 46.

[22] See also an oracle given to the Spartans: "You request Arcadia, . . . I will not grant it!" (Herodotus 1.66); *Palatine Anthology* 6.77.3–4, another to Theseus ("He came seeking good laws, but I shall give him such as no other city of mortal man has!"); an oracle preserved in the *Suda*, s.v. Ἀρχίας (P&W no. 229: "You come in order to ask Phoebus to what land you should go, but . . ."); or a fourth directed to the Magnesians (P&W no. 379), telling them to abandon their plans and find another place to colonize. For such responses as generic in oracles, see Fontenrose (1978) 177–78.

[23] Fontenrose (1978) Q47.

[24] See, e.g., various oracles given to leaders looking for a new home: Athamas (P&W no. 197: wherever he is hosted by "white animals," which turn out to be sheep); the founders of Ephesus (234: wherever a fish "points" and a wild boar "guides"); Boeotians (no. 309: wherever white ravens appear); Gephyraeans (no. 312: follow cattle until they recline in weariness); Locrus (no. 323: wherever he is bitten by a "wooden dog," which turns out to be a thorny bramble called "dog-briar"); and the Cretan founders of Hamaxitos in the Troad (no. 453: wherever the "earthborn" make war against them, which turns out to be mice that destroy their shield straps and bow strings by gnawing on them). See Fontenrose (1978) 73–74 and Section 4.5 below for more colonization oracles that have this feature, for example, an oracle for Cadmus that advises him to take a wandering cow as his *hêgemôn*.

Circe's words here reflect another important feature of archaic oracles, one that has again been emphasized by Fontenrose: a "whenever" condition articulated by two phrases that almost always appear in the initial position of a hexameter:[25] "But whenever" (ἀλλ' ὁπότ' ἄν)[26] followed by "then indeed" (καὶ τότε δὴ). In her advice to Odysseus, Circe neglects the second temporal marker (καὶ τότε δὴ), but she does give her commands in the infinitive (κέλσαι and ἰέναι) in good oracular style. We can recall, for example, the famously obscure oracle that the Pythia allegedly gave to Croesus, which contains three jussive infinitives of this type:[27]

> ἀλλ' ὅταν ἡμίονος βασιλεὺς Μήδοισι γένηται,
> καὶ τότε, Λυδὲ ποδαβρέ, πολυψήφιδα παρ᾽Ἕρμον
> φεύγειν μηδὲ μένειν, μηδ' αἰδεῖσθαι κακὸς εἶναι.
>
> But whenever a mule becomes king of the Medes,
> then, indeed, you, O tender-footed Lydian, flee along
> the many-pebbled Hermos river
> and neither remain nor be ashamed to be a coward!

Or another oracle given to the Siphnians:[28] "But whenever (ἀλλ᾽ ὅταν) in Siphnos the prytaneion becomes white and the agora white-browed, then, indeed, (τότε δὴ) must a prudent man beware (φράσσασθαι) of a wooden ambush and a red herald."

Historians are sometimes concerned, and rightly so, whether the hexametrical oracles quoted by authors of the classical period are, in fact, "historical" according to modern standards,[29] but this question need not detain us, because we are primarily interested in the generic form these oracles take and not their content. Therefore, if ancient authors like Herodotus accept these oracles as "historical," they must (in one way or another) conform to the generic expectations of an oracle as a hexametrical poem. By this

[25] Fontenrose (1978) 166–70 and 185 on the oracles of Delphi and Bakis; he calls the "whenever" part of the sentence the "condition precedent" and the "then" part of the sentence the "message."

[26] For the apparent oddity of beginning an oracle with ἀλλά, see Parke and Wormell (1956) 2.xxii: "The large number of oracles beginning with ἀλλά or adversative δέ early in the first line bears witness to the frequency with which the kernel of the oracle was detached from its shell. And there is confirmation in Aristophanes' parodies that it was in this abbreviated version that oracles frequently circulated."

[27] Herodotus 1.55.1 = P&W no. 54; see Fontenrose (1978) 168–69.

[28] Herodotus 3.57 = P&W 65. Sometimes ancient authors record only the second half of the condition, for example, an oracle of Bakis quoted by Pausanias (4.27.4) that begins "Then indeed (καὶ τότε δή) the flower of Sparta will perish. . . ." The second half of another oracle, which is fully preserved by Herodotus (6.19 = P&W no. 84), also seems to have circulated independently, as it appears alone in *Palatine Anthology* 14.89: "Then indeed (καὶ τότε δή), Miletus, contriver of evil deeds, you will become the feast for many others. . . ."

[29] Fontenrose (1978), for example, tries to distinguish between "legendary," "quasi-historical," and "historical."

standard, Aristophanes also provides us with exceptionally good evidence for the traditional form of this "whenever-then" formula at the beginning of oracles, because in his comedies, he often pokes fun at oracle-mongers by mimicking the types of oracles that were being read, performed, or at least remembered in Athens in the late fifth century BCE.[30] These parodies are important, because, as was mentioned earlier, Aristophanes switches to dactylic hexameters—a meter foreign to the comic stage—and then accurately reproduces a number of their traditional and easily recognizable features. We can take as an example the initial hexametrical verses of a parody from *Knights*, which the oracle-monger on stage attributes to the legendary seer "Bakis":[31]

> But whenever (ἀλλ᾽ ὁπόταν) the crook-taloned, rawhide eagle snatches
> in its beak the dimwitted blood-guzzling serpent,
> then indeed (δὴ τότε) the garlic breath of the Paphlagons will perish.

Although the apodosis following the "whenever" condition in oracles is most often a command, usually in the form of an infinitive, here we see another alternative: a prediction in the future tense. And in fact, the verse-initial phrase "But whenever . . ." (ἀλλ᾽ ὅποταν), with which Circe begins her instructions, remains a "mantic cliché" down to the Roman period.[32] Lucian, for example, has his characters recite oracles of "Sibyl" and "Bakis" that begin in this same fashion[33] and in the extant *Sibylline Oracles*, a pseudepigraphic collection put together in the Imperial Period, there are approximately twenty examples of prophecies

[30] For the importance of Aristophanes in reconstructing the practices of these *chresmologoi*, see Fontenrose (1978) 154–55: "Aristophanes' comedies provide us with the best, most plentiful and most intimate information on their activities. He lets us see them at work in Athens, their practices and claims as they plied their trade. There is comic exaggeration in his picture, but as in all great comedy, it is exaggeration of the truth." For the oracle-mongers, who are often the butt of his jokes, see Pretagostini (1982) 167–68, Smith (1989), Muecke (1998), and Flower (2008) 58–65. See also Henrichs (2003) 216–22 on the importance of this evidence for the circulation and reading of oracles from written collections. For oracular parodies in the fragments other Attic comic playwrights, see Novokhatko (2018) 132–33.

[31] Aristophanes, *Knights* 197–99. See also *Lysistrata* 770–76: "And whenever (ἀλλ᾽ ὁπόταν) the swallows hole up in a single home, fleeing the hoopoes and leaving the phallus alone, (i.e., *then*) there will be an end to evils, and high-thundering Zeus shall reverse what's up and what's down"; all translations from Aristophanes are by Henderson (2000) loc. cit.

[32] Lightfoot (2007) 162: "(the Sibyl) does include mantic clichés, which serve to characterize the speaking voice as prophetic . . . (including) the ubiquitous "when . . . then" structure (ἀλλ᾽ ὁπότ᾽ ἄν . . . καὶ τότε δή) and variants."

[33] Lucian, *Peregrinus* 29–30: "But whenever (ἀλλ᾽ ὁπόταν) Proteus, noblest of Cynics . . . leaps into the flame, and comes to lofty Olympus, then indeed (δὴ τότε) all of you, who eat the fruit of the land, I command you to honor him as the greatest night-wandering hero (νυκτιπόλον τιμᾶν κέλομαι ἥρωα μέγιστον)" (attributed to a Sibyl) and "But whenever (ἀλλ᾽ ὁπόταν) a Cynic with many names leaps into roaring flame, . . . then indeed (δὴ τότε) the others, the jackals that follow his footsteps, must mimic (μιμεῖσθαι χρὴ) the fate of the departed wolf" (attributed to a Bakis).

(or "paragraphs") beginning with the "whenever-then" formula,[34] a fact which suggests that in later times the Greeks in the East thought that this formula was as typical of a "Sibyl," as Aristophanes thought it was typical of a "Bakis."

There are, in fact, two versions of this formula: the more popular "whenever-then" version, which keys the command to a moment in time, and the less frequent "wherever-there" version, which keys the action to the arrival at a special place. In "colonization oracles," to borrow a phrase from Fontenrose,[35] these conditions often describe a natural landmark, like "the groves of Persephone" mentioned by Circe, or the position or movement of animals that will indicate the site of the future city, for example, in this oracle instructing the Argives where to found a colony in Macedonia:[36]

ἀλλ' ἴθ' ἐπειγόμενος βοττηίδα πρὸς πολύμηλον·
ἔνθα δ' ἂν ἀργικέρωτας ἴδῃς χιονώδεας αἶγας
εὐνηθέντας ὕπνῳ, κείνης χθονὸς ἐν δαπέδοισι
θῦε θεοῖς μακάρεσσι καὶ ἄστυ κτίζε πόληος.

Go in haste to Bottêis rich in herds,
and wherever you see wild-horned, snowy-white goats
recumbent in sleep, on the ground of that land
(i.e., there) sacrifice to the blessed gods and found a city.

We find similar language and syntax in other colonization oracles, for example, the end of the Delphic oracle (mentioned earlier) given to the leader of the Spartan helots wishing to settle Sicyon:[37] "wherever (ὅπου) the goat warmly embraces the salt swell by wetting the tip of his grey beard, there (ἔνθα) build Tarantum on good footing near Satyrion." Similar, too, is another Delphic oracle given to the Chalcidians:[38] "Where (ᾗ) the Apsia, the most holy of rivers, falls into the sea, and where (ἔνθ'), as one enters it (i.e., the river from the sea), the female weds the male, there (ἔνθα) found a city!" Diodorus explains that the Chalcidians finally saw "on the banks of the river Apsia a grapevine (i.e., a word of the feminine gender) entwined about a wild fig tree (i.e., a word of the male gender)" and founded the city there.[39]

[34] Lightfoot (2007) 184–85.
[35] Fontenrose (1978) 137–44 and Dougherty (1992).
[36] P&W nos. 225–26.
[37] Diodorus Siculus 8.21.3 = P&W no. 46. For a similar seaside setting, note also P&W no. 382 ("Go to the bay of Pamphylloi, Lycippus, until you come to the overlook of Thorax and the steep flow of the Amanthios River . . . There the Magnesians shall inhabit the home of Mandrolutos") and (in reverse order) 497 ("Blessed are the men who will inhabit that city of the Thracian coast . . . , where the fish and the deer graze the same pasture"). For discussion, see Fontenrose (1978) 70–71 and Suárez de la Torre (1994a) 17–21.
[38] Diodorus Siculus 8.23.2.
[39] Diodorus Siculus 8.23.3.

And, as in the case of Circe's advice to Odysseus, it is not surprising that many of these visual clues can be seen from a boat coasting along the shore.

We have seen, then, that both types of conditions—the "whenever-then" or the "wherever-there"—are common enough in the oracles of the Pythia, Bakis, and the Sibyl, as well as in the parodies by Aristophanes and Lucian, and that they seem to be a traditional feature of the short hexametrical genre known as the oracle. I suggest, therefore, that when Circe begins her advice to Odysseus she falls into the cadence of a traditional hexametrical oracle and in fact even seems to echo the specific genre of a colonization oracle. But why colonization? The Greeks began, in fact, to send organized settlements to the Black Sea, North Africa, and the West at the start of the eighth century, and Reinhardt and Redfield have both noted in passing that the *Odyssey*—especially the embedded tales of the long sea journey—occasionally reflects the hungry colonial gaze of the Greeks, especially in the brief description that Odysseus gives of the small island that sits offshore of the land of the Cyclopes (9.130–39):[40]

> [Craftsmen] would have made of this island a good settlement, for the island is in no way poor, but would bear all things in season. On it are meadows by the shores of the grey sea, well-watered meadows and soft, where vines would never fail, and on it, too, is level plough-land, from which they might reap from season to season harvests exceedingly deep, so rich is the soil beneath; and on it, too, is a harbor giving safe anchorage. . . .[41]

These are not the comments of a pirate looking for booty—a role that Odysseus plays earlier in the embedded tales—but rather those of a civic leader looking for a place to build a new city. I am not claiming, of course, that by placing such oracular language in Circe's mouth in Book 10 the poet is suggesting that Odysseus is about to establish a new city near the entrance to Hades. I claim only that oracular speech is part of the generic hexametrical repertoire of the performing poet (or he is at least aware of its forms) and that he uses these forms whenever they are appropriate to the dramatic

[40] See, e.g., Reinhardt (1996) 78, who comments, "Odysseus is almost as excited, as if he wanted to become a colonist." Redfield (2009) 276, for his part, says it is described with "a farmer's eye," albeit looking at an island that "could well be Pithecusae, the earliest of the western colonies." There should be no surprise that Odysseus himself becomes an important model for late-archaic and classical colonization, especially in the West; see Malkin (1998).

[41] This in the translation of Redfield (2009) 276.

situation: in this case preparing Odysseus for a journey to a distant place where none have gone before.

4.2 A Script for Raising the Dead

Whereas in her initial instructions Circe tells Odysseus how to find a place near the entrance to Hades (this was the "map"), she next begins the "script" section of her oracle by instructing him how to perform libations and what promises to make to the dead (10.516–25):

> ἔνθα δ' ἔπειθ', ἥρως, χριμφθεὶς πέλας, ὥς σε κελεύω,
> βόθρον ὀρύξαι ὅσον τε πυγούσιον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα,
> ἀμφ' αὐτῷ δὲ χοὴν χεῖσθαι πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι,
> πρῶτα μελικρήτῳ, μετέπειτα δὲ ἡδέϊ οἴνῳ,
> τὸ τρίτον αὖθ' ὕδατι· ἐπὶ δ' ἄλφιτα λευκὰ παλύνειν.
> πολλὰ δὲ γουνοῦσθαι νεκύων ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα,
> ἐλθὼν εἰς Ἰθάκην στεῖραν βοῦν, ἥ τις ἀρίστη,
> ῥέξειν ἐν μεγάροισι πυρήν τ' ἐμπλησέμεν ἐσθλῶν,
> Τειρεσίῃ δ' ἀπάνευθεν ὄϊν ἱερευσέμεν οἴῳ
> παμμέλαν', ὃς μήλοισι μεταπρέπει ὑμετέροισιν.
>
> And then, next, O hero, coming closer, as I command you,
> dig a pit, as much as one cubit in each direction,
> and around it pour a libation for all of the dead,
> first of milk mixed with honey, next of sweet wine,
> and the third, in turn, of water. And sprinkle in addition white barley
> and mourn greatly the powerless heads of the deceased (vowing that)[42]
> when you come to Ithaca you will sacrifice a barren heifer, the best there is,
> in your palace and you will fill the fire with excellent gifts,
> and that to Tiresias alone you will separately sacrifice a ram,
> completely black, which stands out among your flocks.

First, we should note that in this section Circe continues the initial syntax of the "map" section: the verse-initial ἔνθα δ' ἔπειθ' (516: "and then, next") recalls the original "whenever" condition at the start and it is then followed by the four jussive infinitives underlined above. Circe also reiterates the oracular context of this new section by addressing Odysseus again with a vocative, but especially by underscoring her authoritative role (516: ὥς σε κελεύω, "as I command you"). We find, in fact, a similar emphasis on authority in other oracular texts. Another Aristophanic parody, for example, ends a verse with

[42] There seems to be at least one verse missing here that included a verb of promising to introduce the series of future infinitives that follow, although Chantraine (1953) 2.311 suggests that this promise is implicit in the verb γουνοῦσθαι, which he translates as "promettre dans ses prières."

"as I command" (ὥς ἐπιτέλλω)[43] and forms of the verb κελεύειν used here by Circe appear in a number of extant oracles, usually in the same position at the end of the first verse.[44] In this second set of instructions, then, Circe provides a detailed "script" of the necromantic ceremony that Odysseus must perform, for example, the pouring of various libations, for which she deploys technical terms (517–19: βόθρος, χοής, and μελύκρητος) that are rare in Homeric poetry, but are not at all unusual in oracles concerned with ritual instructions.[45] One oracle, for example, instructs the Athenians to pour *choes* annually for some unjustly killed Aetolians and several others command that ghosts be appeased by giving them chthonic sacrifices on an annual basis.[46] At other times the Pythia orders cities to honor some dead person as a hero, for instance, Echetlios at Athens, a ritual that also involves chthonic sacrifice and libations.[47]

As it happens, Greek oracles are often concerned with sacrifices to chthonic deities that were an essential part of the foundation of a colony, as

[43] Aristophanes *Birds* 977–78: κἢν μέν, θέσπιε κοῦρε, ποῇς ταῦθ' ὡς ἐπιτέλλω,/ αἰετὸς ἐν νεφέλῃσι γενήσεαι ("And if, divine youth, you do these things, as I command, you shall become an eagle in the clouds"). See also an oracle preserved in *Palatine Anthology* 6.67, which bears the title "oracle given to Laius of Thebes (i.e., Oedipus' father)" and ends with ὥς γὰρ ἔνευσα ("For thus have I decreed").

[44] P&W no. 17.1 (κελεύω at the end of the first hexameter); 173.1 (σε κελεύω same position): 230.1 (ὡς σε κελεύω same position); 43.1 (Ἀπόλλων . . .σε κελεύει at the end of the second hexameter); and 363.1 (σε . . .Φοῖβος ἄνωγεν at the end of the first hexameter). When Sophocles in *Oedipus Rex* 90 has Creon report that "Phoebus commands us (ἄνωγεν ἡμᾶς Φοῖβος) . . . to drive out the pollution" (albeit in iambic trimeters), he probably has this convention in mind.

[45] See Johnston (2005a) 301–4, who lists fifty-four oracles concerned with the dead, most of them advising or commanding a city to appease angry ghosts. With four exceptions (P&W nos. 33, 88, 326, and 409), all of these oracles are paraphrased in prose, rather than quoted *in extenso*.

[46] P&W no. 544. For the chthonic sacrifice, the verb is usually *enagizein*, e.g., P&W no. 385 (the ghosts of unnamed children) or 564 (the ghost of Actaeon), but one also finds the usual *thuein* as well, e.g., P&W no. 542 (to Icarus). The appeasement of ghosts is denoted by *hilaskesthai* or related words, e.g., P&W nos. 75 (murdered boys), 114 (Pausanias), 199 (Medea's children), 386 (Psamethe and Linus), 392 (the "hero in Temesa"), and 570 (Charila).

[47] P&W no. 90. The command usually uses the verb *timan* or *sebein*. Other examples include P&W nos. 88 (Cleomenes at Astypalea), 409 (Hector by the Thebans) and 419 (Heracleides by the people of Heracleia-on-Pontos), but we also find (no. 326) "to placate them with sacrifices as heroes." All of these rites would have included libations and holocaust sacrifice. See also a fragment of an oracle apparently addressed to Solon that tells him to placate two dead men buried on Salamis (P&W 326): "Appease the native rulers of the land as heroes with sacrifices. . . ." The Roman-period oracles of Apollo from Claros show a special concern in Anatolia for such foundation sacrifices, for example, an oracle inscribed at Callipolis about the foundation sacrifice for a protective statue of Apollo: "If you are anxious to escape from grief, sacrifice to the gods beneath the earth and heed the libations on each occasion. To Euchaites (i.e., Hades) slaughter a he-goat and to the goddess (i.e., Persephone) a sheep, both victims black . . . when the black blood has entered the pits (*bothroi*), then pour in loose earth from above. . . ." See also an oracle inscribed in Hieropolis: "The painful anger of the deities I bid you avoid by libations, feasts and fully accomplished sacrifices. First then to Earth, mother of all, bring into her *megaron* a cow from the herd of four measures and sacrifice it with sweet-smelling incense and then ravage it with fire and when the flame has consumed it all, then sprinkle around with libations and the mixture of honey and soil together." For more detailed discussion and bibliography of this Clarian oracle and others like it, see Faraone (1992b) 62–63.

we can see, for example, in a legendary oracle given to Cadmus at Delphi. The Pythia begins with a salutation and command to pay attention (φράζεο δή μοι μῦθον Ἀγήνορος ἔκγονε Κάδμε) and then she explains where Cadmus should situate the new city of Thebes and what kind of initial ritual he should perform there:[48]

προλιπὼν ἴθι Πυθὼ δῖαν
. . . διά τε Φλεγύων καὶ Φωκίδος, ἔστ᾽ ἂν ἵκηαι
βουκόλον ἠδὲ βόας κηριτρεφέος Πελάγοντος.
ἔνθα δὲ προσπελάσας συλλάμβανε βοῦν ἐρίμυκον
ἥ κεν δὴ νώτοισιν ἐπ᾽ ἀμφοτέροισιν ἔχῃσι
λευκὸν σῆμ᾽ ἑκάτερθε περίτροχον ἠΰτε μήνης·
τήνδε σὺ ἡγεμόνα σχὲ περιτρίπτοιο κελεύθου.
σῆμα δέ τοι ἐρέω μαλ᾽ ἀριφραδὲς οὐδέ σε λήσει·
ἔνθα κέ τοι πρώτιστα βοὸς κέρας ἀγραύλοιο
ἴζηται κλίνῃ τε πέδῳ γόνυ ποιήεντι,
καὶ τότε τὴν μὲν ἔπειτα μελαμφύλλῳ Χθονὶ ῥέζειν
ἁγνῶς καὶ καθαρῶς, Γαίῃ δ᾽ ὅταν ἱερὰ ῥέξῃς
ὄχθῳ ἐπ᾽ ἀκροτάτῳ κτίζειν πόλιν εὐρυάγυιαν. . . .

Leaving divine Pytho go . . .
straight through the lands of the Phlegians and Phocis, until you come
to the cowherd and cows of Pelagon born-in-misery.
There approach and seize a deep-lowing cow,
whichever one indeed has on both sides of her back
a white symbol like the crescent of the moon.
Keep this cow as a guide (*hêgemôn*) for your well-worn path.
And I will tell you an obvious sign (*sêma*) and it will not escape you:
whenever indeed the horn of the field-dwelling cow first
settles down and inclines its knee to the ground,
then, indeed, next sacrifice it to the dark-leaved Earth,
in a holy and pure manner, and whenever you sacrifice to Earth,
(then) found a wide-wayed city on the highest hilltop. . . .

The Pythia ends by predicting Cadmus' fame and marriage with Harmonia, if he carries out the instructions in the oracle, that is: precisely how Circe ends her advice by predicting the arrival of the dead souls and Tiresias, if Odysseus follows her instructions for the sacrifice. This oracle is longer than most preserved by later sources and it might, in fact, have been composed for some lost epic poem about the founding of Thebes, for example, Antimachus' *Thebaid*, which was composed in the late fifth century BCE.[49] Indeed, line

[48] P&W no. 374.4–15, with the discussion of Fontenrose (1978) 175–76.

[49] Fontenrose (1978) 360: "They look like lines from an epic poem. . . . Possibly the eighteen-line version comes from Antimachus of Kolophon's *Thebaid*." Earlier (pp. 175–76), however, he suggests that it might have come from the lost collection of Musaeus' oracles. Of course, Antimachus might have copied the language of the *Odyssey*, but, in fact, the very different nature of the rituals described makes it more likely these lines are independently modeled on an oracular genre well known to both the Homeric poets and Antimachus.

10—"And I will tell you an obvious sign (*sêma*) . . ."—is also found, as we shall soon see, in Tiresias' prophecy in *Odyssey* 11. The *sêma* here in Cadmus' oracle signals, in fact, the start of the "script" section, which comprises two "whenever-then" formulas that command him to sacrifice the helpful *hêgemôn* to the goddess Earth and found his new city on the spot.

We find similar advice about foundation ceremonies in another Aristophanic parody. In the *Birds*, when the comic hero Peisthetairos is trying to inaugurate *his* new city, an oracle-monger interrupts him to offer an ancient oracle of "Bakis," which begins with the mantic cliché discussed earlier:[50]

> ἀλλ᾽ ὅταν οἰκήσωσι λύκοι πολιαί τε κορῶναι
> ἐν ταὐτῷ τὸ μεταξὺ Κορίνθου καὶ Σικυῶνος
> πρῶτον Πανδώρᾳ θῦσαι λευκότριχα κριόν·
>
> But whenever the wolves and the white crows
> dwell together between Corinth and Sicyon,
> (i.e., then) sacrifice first a white fleeced ram to Pandora (i.e., Earth).

This oracle includes, as we have seen before, unusual animal behavior as a trigger—wolves and crows living in the same place—and then ends with a command in the infinitive to sacrifice to Earth. One cannot, in short, found a city without sacrifice to the Earth (i.e., Pandora, "the giver of all gifts") or other chthonian deities, upon whom the city's foundations will rest secure.

After her instructions about libations and prayers, Circe organizes the third and final part of her advice as yet another long "whenever-then" construction, followed by a pair of instructions in the infinitive, each followed in turn by predictions (526–40):

> αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν εὐχῇσι λίσῃ κλυτὰ ἔθνεα νεκρῶν,
> ἔνθ᾽ ὄϊν ἀρνειὸν ῥέζειν θῆλύν τε μέλαιναν
> εἰς Ἔρεβος στρέψας, αὐτὸς δ᾽ ἀπονόσφι τραπέσθαι
> ἱέμενος ποταμοῖο ῥοάων· ἔνθα δὲ πολλαὶ
> ψυχαὶ ἐλεύσονται νεκύων κατατεθνηώτων·
> δὴ τότ᾽ ἔπειθ᾽ ἑτάροισιν ἐποτρῦναι καὶ ἀνῶξαι
> μῆλα, τὰ δὴ κατάκειτ᾽ ἐσφαγμένα νηλέϊ χαλκῷ,
> δείραντας κατακῆαι, ἐπεύξασθαι δὲ θεοῖσιν,
> ἰφθίμῳ τ᾽ Ἄϊδῃ καὶ ἐπαινῇ Περσεφονείῃ·
> αὐτὸς δὲ ξίφος ὀξὺ ἐρυσσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ
> ἧσθαι, μηδὲ ἐᾶν νεκύων ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα
> αἵματος ἄσσον ἴμεν πρὶν Τειρεσίαο πυθέσθαι.
> ἔνθα τοι αὐτίκα μάντις ἐλεύσεται, ὄρχαμε λαῶν,
> ὅς κέν τοι εἴπῃσιν ὁδὸν καὶ μέτρα κελεύθου
> νόστον θ᾽, ὡς ἐπὶ πόντον ἐλεύσεαι ἰχθυόεντα.

[50] *Birds* 967–68 and 971 (the *chresmologos* is interrupted). I follow the translation and interpretation of Edmonds (2011a) 256. Line 968 is a near-quotation of a verse from the oracle (quoted earlier) given to the Spartan helots; see Dunbar (1995) ad locc. for other echoes of oracular language.

But whenever with prayers you finish supplicating the glorious tribes of the dead,
then sacrifice a ram and a black ewe
turning them toward Erebus, while you turn yourself backward,
toward the flows of the river. At this point many
souls will come forth of the men that have died.
Then indeed call your shipmates and order them
to flay the sheep lying there slain by the pitiless bronze
and burn them entirely and pray to the gods,
to mighty Hades and to dread Persephone,
and you yourself drawing a sharp sword from your thigh
sit down and do not allow the powerful heads of the dead
to come near the blood, until you have inquired about Tiresias.
Then indeed immediately the seer will come, leader of men,
who can tell you the way to go and the length of the path
and your homecoming: how you might arrive over the teeming deep.

Here the animal sacrifice seems to serve two purposes: the invocation to Hades and Persephone suggests that they are gifts to the king and queen of the underworld, but it is clear in line 537 ("do not allow the dead to come near the blood") and is then spelled out later in *Odyssey* 11, that, prior to burning up the bodies of the ram and ewe, Odysseus is to let the blood drain from the necks of the animals into the pit—blood that will attract the dead from Hades.[51] And here, for the first time, Circe twice uses future verbs to predict the successful outcome of the rituals: the souls of the dead "will come" in line 530 (ἐλεύσονται) and finally the Theban seer "will come" himself in line 538 (ἐλεύσεται).

Circe's long speech in *Odyssey* 10 can, therefore, be summarized as follows:

Part 1. Instructions for the voyage (504–15): "Map"

a. Set up mast and sails and let the wind take you,
b. *but whenever* you completely cross the Ocean, where there are groves of trees, etc.,
c. *then* beach the ship and go toward Hades, where rivers coincide near a rock.

Part 2. Instructions for necromancy (516–25): "Script"

a. *Then* next *as I command you* dig a *bothros* and libate honey-milk, wine, and water,
b. and make vows for future animal sacrifices at Ithaca to the dead (barren heifer) and to Tiresias (black ram).

[51] Heath (2005).

Part 3. More instructions for necromancy (526–38): "Script"

a. *But whenever* you have supplicated the dead,
b. *then* sacrifice a ram and a black ewe.
c. *And* then the souls of the dead *will come.*
d. *Then* order the men to flay and burn the two animals as holocaust victims and pray to Hades and Persephone.
e. Sit and keep the dead away from the blood (i.e., in the *bothros*),
f. and *then* Tiresias *will come.*

These instructions, in short, take a form similar to that of a colonization oracle, telling Odysseus first how to get to a far-off place and then what rituals to perform after he arrives. They are almost entirely instructional—deploying eleven jussive infinitives in all—and the only real predictions about the future come at the very end, where Circe assures him that the necromantic offerings will result in the appearance first of the dead and then of the prophet himself.

4.3 "Orphic" Tablets and Nausicaa's Advice

As was mentioned earlier, Martin has stressed the similarities that Circe's advice has with Nausicaa's instructions to Odysseus later in the poem and with those inscribed on the "Orphic" gold leaves, small sheets of gold foil of classical and Hellenistic date that are found mainly in graves in Magna Graecia, in Thessaly, and on Crete. He makes this connection, in part, because all three of these texts take the form of a "map and script" and because all three are hexametrical and focus on a visit to an otherworldly and potentially dangerous place. At the level of the speech-act this comparison is a good one, but it is not, I think, entirely precise, because Circe does not, as we saw earlier, tell Odysseus how to get inside of Hades itself, but only near its entrance.[52] The gold tablets are, moreover, similar

[52] Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) 76: "In fact Odysseus does not cross the threshold into Hades or appear before the thrones of the gods of the underworld." The confusion seems to arise from the ambiguity of the prepositional phrase εἰς Ἀίδαο δόμους, which can mean both "into the halls of Hades" or "to the halls of Hades" (i.e., to their entrance). Before her formal instructions, Circe informs Odysseus (10.490–93) that he must ἱκέσθαι εἰς Ἀίδαο δόμους, but at line 502 Odysseus, after asking for a guide, complains that no one yet has ever εἰς Ἄιδος ἀφίκετο with his swift ship. In the latter case, at least, it is clear that Odysseus is talking about beaching his ship on the shore at an entrance to

to Circe's speech in one other way that deserves further analysis. Since the celebrated study of Zuntz, the tablets have been divided into two categories: the A group, short texts that address themselves to Persephone; and the longer B texts, which often provide a detailed map of Hades and address themselves in part to unnamed "guardians" in the underworld.[53] The main purpose of both types is to advise the dead person of the crucial passwords one must speak in order to avoid punishment and gain entry to an idyllic place in the underworld, like the Elysian Fields. Only four A texts survive, three of which (A 1–3) begin with a speech that one must give to Persephone in Hades. The first (A 1) ends by quoting Persephone's positive response, but only the fourth tablet sets these speeches in a wider narrative frame (A 4):[54]

ἀλλ' ὁπόταν ψυχὴ προλίπηι φάος ἀελίοιο,
δεξιὸν . . . ἐξιέναι πεφυλαγμένον εὖ μάλα πάντα·
χαῖρε παθὼν τὸ πάθημα τὸ δ' οὔπω πρόσθ' ἐπεπόνθεις·
θεὸς ἐγένου ἐξ ἀνθρώπου· ἔριφος ἐς γάλα ἔπετες.
χαῖρ<ε> χαῖρε· δεξιὰν ὁδοιπόρει
λειμῶνάς θ' ἱεροὺς καὶ ἄλσεα Φερσεφονείας.

But whenever (i.e., your) soul leaves the light of the sun,
(i.e., then) to the right . . . go straight having kept watch
on all things very well.
"Hail, you having experienced what you had not experienced before.
A god you have become from a man. A kid you fell into milk.
Hail, hail; make your way to the right,
(to) the sacred meadows and groves of Persephone."

As Edmonds has rightly stressed, this introduction begins with the familiar mantic cliché (ἀλλ' ὁπόταν) followed—as we should by now expect—by a jussive infinitive.[55] The four remaining verses—two prose lines framed by single hexameters—are, however, part of the congratulatory speech of Persephone to the initiate, and thus the scribe seems to have left out the most

Hades, as in fact he does in Book 11. In Circe's oracular speech, however, she imagines two actions (514–15): "beach your ship and (i.e., then) you alone εἰς Ἀίδεο ἰέναι δόμον εὐρώεντα." Because this phrase resembles a formula used to describe where people go after they are killed, it would be natural to translate "into the house of Hades," but then in the next line Circe describes a spot outside of Hades (where the Periphegethon and Cocytus rivers flow into the Acheron river), at which Odysseus is to dig a *bothros* and make his necromantic sacrifice.

[53] Zuntz (1971) ad locc. Both the A and B texts survive, moreover, in a variety of lengths: the shortest types, which simply quote the important passwords; and the longer varieties, which frame the passwords with advice about where one should go and with whom one should speak.

[54] Zuntz (1971) A4; I use the text and translation (with minor changes) of Edmonds (2011b) 22, but without sublinear dots or brackets.

[55] Edmonds (2011a) 257–58.

essential information: the passwords that the deceased are supposed to speak to Persephone and that on the other tablets begin with a genealogical claim of purity: "Pure I come from the pure, Queen of those below the earth!"[56]

Three of the longest B texts, from Hipponion, Petelia, and Entella, are dated respectively to the fifth, fourth, and third centuries BCE, and they, too, preserve a narrative frame that also seems to be oracular. Janko's archetype for the full version of the B texts begins as follows:[57]

> Μνημοσύνης τόδε (?)θρῖον· ἐπεὶ ἄν μέλλῃσι θανεῖσθαι
> [ἐν χρυσίῳ] τόδε γραψ[άσθω μ]εμνημένος ἥρως
> [μὴ τόν γ' ἐκ]πάγλως ὑπά[γ]ο[ι] σκότος ἀμφικαλύψας
> εὑρήσεις δ'Ἄϊδαο δόμων ἐπὶ δεξιὰ κρήνην,
> πὰρ δ'αὐτῇ λευκὴν ἐστηκυῖαν κυπάρισσον,
> ἔνθα κατερχόμεναι ψυχαὶ νεκύων ψύχονται. . . .
>
> This is the (?)leaf of Memory. Whenever a hero faces death,[58]
> (i.e. then) [let him] recall this and have it inscribed [on gold]
> [lest] the murk cover [him] and lead [him] down in dread:
> "On the right, you'll find in Hades' halls a spring,
> and standing by it a white cypress-tree,
> where the dead souls descending cool themselves. . . ."

Here the framing text again begins with a "whenever" clause (ἐπεὶ ἄν) that is probably followed (the lacunae forbid certainty) by a third-person command that a "hero" (presumably the owner of the tablet) write down the words that follow, presumably so he can consult them after he dies. These B texts continue on for another sixteen or so verses to describe a body of water (lines 8–9: "the pool of Memory"); some unnamed "guardians," who will question us (10–11); a scripted reply for us, which includes a genealogical boast and a request to drink (12–15); and finally assurances of a better life in the underworld (16–20). We should note that here, as in Circe's advice, the predictions for future happiness occur only if the instructions have been followed, for example, in the Hipponion tablet ("You, too, having drunk [i.e., from the lake of Memory], will go along the sacred road on which other glorious initiates and *bacchoi* travel") or the one from Petelia ("Thereafter you will rule among the other heroes"). Although we find these three explicitly oracular versions

[56] See Herrero de Jáuregui (2011) for the importance of these genealogical boasts and Homeric parallels for them.

[57] Except for the first line, I use the text and translation of the archetype of Janko (2016), which updates Janko (1984); for the text and interpretation of the first line, see West (1975c) ad loc. and Faraone (2009).

[58] When Isis reveals herself to Lucius in Book 11 of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, she makes a similar prediction: "Whenever you have completed your lifetime and go down to the underworld, you will find me in the subterranean vault . . . and you will adore me frequently, because I am well disposed to you."

only in Magna Graecia, the shorter versions of the B texts from Thessaly and Crete and an allusion to them in a Pindaric ode performed in Thebes all suggest strongly that the longer version was widely known in the Greek world.[59]

Who, then, is imagined to be the composer of the instructions preserved on all of these tablets? As was said earlier, scholars commonly assign the verses to Orpheus, because the meter in both the A and B versions is predominantly hexametrical and because Orpheus alone of the poets was said to have returned safely from the underworld. He is, in short, the hexametrical poet best equipped to describe for us the geography of Hades and to advise us on what to say and do when we get there. As a result there is a long-standing consensus that these texts, as well as the Nekyia scene in the *Odyssey*, in some way or another depend from or reflect a lost "Orphic" poem that narrated Orpheus' descent into the underworld.[60] On the other hand, Edmonds has rightly stressed the fact that the Greeks knew of another eminently reliable hexametrical source of information about far-off places: those men and women inspired by the gods, who spoke hexametrical oracles.[61] We can, as it turns out, examine the relationship between Circe's advice and the gold tablets from both perspectives. Martin, who agrees about the Orphic source of the tablets,[62] points out some verbal echoes between them and Circe's speech, most notably the mention of the house of Hades as an important destination and the parallels between the final verse previously quoted above from the B tablets and Circe's prediction: ἔνθα κατερχόμεναι ψυχαὶ νεκύων

[59] For Pindar see the end of *Isthmian* 6, where the poet says, "I will offer him (i.e., Lampon the dead father of the victor) to drink of the sacred water of the Dirke, which the slim-waisted daughters of Memory in her golden robes have made to spring by the strong gates of Thebes" (trans. Nisetich). There is no doubt that Pindar here is recalling the request for (and the eventual offer of) a "drink from the pool of Memory" that we find in the golden tablets, a clear case of a lyric poet reflecting on a traditional hexametrical text; see Faraone (2002) and Obbink (2011) 299–303.

[60] The idea goes back to Comparetti's first publications of these texts; see Graf and Johnston (2007) 54–55. For recent affirmations, see, e.g., Riedweg (1998 and 2002a) and Bernabé and Jeménez San Cristóbal (2008) 71–72. West (1983) 6–7 places this Orphic *Descent to Hades* among the earliest Orphic poems, a group that he dates to the late sixth or early fifth century BCE; see also Martin (2007) 12–13.

[61] Edmonds (2011a) 255–56.

[62] Martin (2007) 12–13 and 19–20. Herrero de Jáuregui (2011) has suggested, from a different angle, that some of the battlefield dialogues between opponents in the *Iliad* also offer structural and formal parallels with the dialogue between the soul of the dead person and the various denizens of the underworld, and this observation seems especially apt, when these dialogues include boasts about genealogy and fame. He, too, sees a lost Orphic *katabasis* poem in the background, but he also discusses other traditions, albeit only attested in the Roman period and later, of people asking for oracles about the fate of souls after death, for which also see Edmonds (2011) 262–63, who discusses such oracles from Trophonius, Didyma, and Delphi, the last being one allegedly given to Plotinus: "Now that you have been freed from the body and you have left the tomb which held your heavenly soul, you come at once to the divine company . . . , where is affection and desire that charms the sight, full of pure joy, brimming with streams of immortality. . . . There dwell Minos and Rhadamanthus."

ψύχονται (Tablet, line 6: "where the dead souls descending cool themselves") and ἔνθα δὲ πολλαὶ/ ψυχαὶ ἐλεύσονται νεκύων κατατεθνηώτων (*Od.* 10.529–30: "then will come forth many souls of the dead who have died.")[63] Both texts reflect, moreover, the same kind of "speech type-scene" of direction and instruction ("map and script") that was discussed earlier,[64] as does the scene in the *Odyssey* where Nausicaa advises Odysseus how to enter the city and palace of her father (6.255–312).[65]

Nausicaa's advice actually includes two sets of instructions interrupted by her embarrassed explanation for why she cannot be seen entering the city with Odysseus. Her second set of instructions, as Martin saw, has many similarities with both Circe's speech and the B tablets (*Odyssey* 6.303–11):[66]

> ἀλλ᾽ ὁπότ᾽ ἄν σε δόμοι κεκύθωσι καὶ αὐλή,
> ὦκα μάλα μεγάροιο διελθέμεν, ὄφρ᾽ ἂν ἵκηαι
> μητέρ᾽ ἐμήν· ἡ δ᾽ ἥσται ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάρῃ ἐν πυρὸς αὐγῇ,
> ἠλάκατα στρωφῶσ᾽ ἁλιπόρφυρα, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι,
> κίονι κεκλιμένη· δμῳαὶ δέ οἱ εἵατ᾽ ὄπισθεν.
> ἔνθα δὲ πατρὸς ἐμοῖο θρόνος ποτικέκλιται αὐτῇ,
> τῷ ὅ γε οἰνοποτάζει ἐφήμενος ἀθάνατος ὥς.
> τὸν παραμειψάμενος μητρὸς περὶ γούνασι χεῖρας
> βάλλειν ἡμετέρης, ἵνα νόστιμον ἦμαρ ἴδηαι.
>
> But whenever the house and courtyard have concealed you,
> (i.e., then) very quickly traverse the hall, until you come
> to my mother. She sits near the hearth in the gleam of the fire
> spinning purple yarn, a marvel to behold,
> leaning against a column and her maids sit beside her.
> There placed near her is the throne of my father,
> upon which he sits drinking wine like an immortal.
> After passing by him, throw your hands around the knees of our mother,
> in order that you might quickly see your day of homecoming.

This advice begins with the "whenever-then" construction followed by two commands in the infinitive: traverse the hall and embrace the knees of her mother. The advice, however, to bypass her father is manifestly odd, but it

[63] Neither of these echoes is quite precise, but Martin (2007) 13–16 stresses how the placement of ἔνθα recalls the way that Circe uses ἔνθα, often emphatically at the start of the hexametrical verse to mark both the temporal and spatial stages in her advice to Odysseus.

[64] Martin (2007) 3–5.

[65] Martin (2007) 24–26.

[66] The first set are similar to Circe's: after telling Odysseus that she will lead him part of the way there, Nausicaa advises him as follows (262–71): "But *whenever* we enter the city [she describes the harbor and the narrow entrance to the town] . . . *there* is the agora on both sides of Poseidon's sanctuary . . . *there* the men busy themselves with ships' tackle . . . because Phaiacians have no care for bow or quiver, only sailing." The syntax here is, however, quite different because in the various apodoses (i.e., the whenever-clauses) we find only descriptions in the present tense, rather than commands or predictions in the future.

does recall the advice in the B tablets to avoid the first fountain and drink from the second. Some commentators have suggested, in fact, that the island of Scheria itself represents some idea of a blessed afterlife and that this advice (i.e., to ignore the king and petition the queen) neatly reflects the politics of the underworld, where queen Persephone is the one whom the dead petition.[67] Odysseus, of course, will petition her to allow him to return home, just as Heracles or Theseus does in the underworld. Even more telling, the initial description of the halls of Alcinoos "concealing" Odysseus recalls the Homeric trope of Hades or the earth "concealing" the dead.[68] On this reading, then, Nausicaa and the B tablets both advise the listener about precisely where to go in the underworld ("map") and what to say and to whom ("script").[69]

Treating oracles, the instructions of Nausicaa and Circe, and the gold tablets as similar kinds of speech type-scenes has, of course, been extremely helpful at a higher level of linguistic analysis, but it does not directly address the fact that all of these instructional texts are also composed in dactylic hexameters and, more importantly, that they—as we have seen—share a number of syntactical features with oracles. These features do not appear, in fact, in other important speeches of advice in the poem. When Athena, for example, after disguising herself as Mentor, advises Telemachus to pull together a crew and go searching for his father (*Od*. 2.288–291), we find a string of imperatives, rather than infinitives, with none of the introductory formulas that we see above in the speeches of Circe and Nausicaa. Likewise, for the two short bits of advice that Athena—this time disguised as a young girl—gives to Odysseus, before he gets to Alcinoos' palace: the first (*Od*. 7.28–36) has three imperatives, again with no conditional setting, and it contains explanations of a gnomic sort (30–33: come silently and do not look or talk to anyone, *because* the locals do not kindly endure visitors), as does the second speech (48–76), in which the disguised Athena tells him (again without the "whenever-then" formula) to go inside the palace (50–53):

> σὺ δ' ἔσω κίε, μηδέ τι θυμῷ
> τάρβει· θαρσαλέος γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἐν πᾶσιν ἀμείνων
> ἔργοισιν τελέθει, εἰ καί ποθεν ἄλλοθεν ἔλθοι.
>
> But you, go inside, and let nothing in your heart
> trouble you; because a bold man in all things
> does better, even if he is a stranger from another land.

[67] Martin (2007) 17–18.
[68] Martin (2007) 17.
[69] In the A tablets the unnamed guardians replace the queen of the underworld.

Both of Athena's speeches resemble, in fact, the hexametrical genre of "instructions" (*hypothêkai*) discussed earlier in Section 2.1, which usually justify the advice with a gnomic reflection.

At this point, therefore, we can better describe the similar commands of Circe, Nausicaa, and the gold tablets as follows: (i) all of them reflect important syntactical features of instructional oracles in dactylic hexameters; (ii) the Orphic tablets and Nausicaa's advice both seem to reflect the same sub-genre of oracles, perhaps attributed to Orpheus, that describes what people will find inside of Hades ("map") and then advise them what to do and say when they are there ("script"); and (iii) Circe's instructions, which do not describe the interior of Hades, seem to reflect a different but related sub-genre, the colonization oracle, which tells colonists how to find their destination by describing coastal landmarks or the odd appearance or behavior of animals, and then how to perform the necessary rituals and prayers once they have arrived. In the two *Odyssey* passages, of course, the poet has used these genres to evoke certain moods or create certain expectations. Circe's speech reveals her to be an authoritative source of information and picks up on other hints that in the embedded tales the poet presents Odysseus as a prototypical colonist. Nausicaa's speech, on the other hand, deepens our sense of the strangeness of Scheria and the possible danger that the queen will in fact deny Odysseus' petition to return to the "land of the living," which in this case is his home on Ithaca.

4.4 More Oracular Speech in the *Odyssey*

In the case of the Chryses episode, we were fortunate to find other instances in which local hymns were incorporated into longer Panhellenic narratives, and we are equally lucky in the case of oracles, because there are a number of other speeches in the *Odyssey* that show concretely how the poet used and played with his audience's expectations of the oracular genre, especially the advice about homecoming that the ghost of Tiresias gives to Odysseus in Book 11 and the similar instructions that Menelaus receives in Book 4 from Proteus. In the past, commentators have noted the parallels between the two episodes and have in some cases even argued whether one passage imitates the other.[70] I suggest, in fact, that in both cases, the poet of the *Odyssey*, began with a more compact version, in which a local female prophet (Circe

[70] 4.389–90 = 10.539–40. Most commentators think that Tiresias' scenes are prior; but see Reinhardt (1996) 105–8, who argues against the *communis opinio* and provides all of the bibliography.

and Proteus' daughter Eidothea) is consulted and provides the needed information by herself, and then he expanded both scenes to include a subsequent male prophet (Tiresias and Proteus), whose prophetic skills are superior and who not only provides the requested advice on how to return home, but also gives additional (and initially unsought) information crucial to the larger Panhellenic themes of his monumental poem: the whereabouts of other heroes returning from Troy and the ultimate fates of the two inquirers.

One obvious sign of this doubling is that Tiresias begins his prophetic speech in Book 11 with the same full line of vocatives with which Circe introduced hers in Book 10: "O son of Laertes, sprung from Zeus, Odysseus of many devices" (*Od*. 11.92).[71] He then asks Odysseus for a drink from the blood in the *bothros*. And before Odysseus can tell him why he has come, Tiresias seems to know and begins his speech as follows (100–103): "A honey-sweet homecoming you seek (δίζηαι), glorious Odysseus, but (δέ) the god will make it difficult for you, for I suspect that you will not escape the notice of the Earthshaker (i.e., Poseidon). . . ." Although scholiasts and modern commentators sometimes fret about how Tiresias could intuit the purpose of Odysseus' visit, his words, in fact, easily fit the pattern of some Delphic responses, for example, those oracles that use the same verb of seeking (δίζηαι or δίζησθε), followed by denial.[72] It should not surprise us, of course, that Tiresias should speak like a prophet! And advice he gives to Odysseus about the cattle of the sun, is, in fact, couched in a version of the by now-familiar conditional construction (106–9):[73] "Yet even so you may reach home though in sorry plight, if you are willing to curb your spirit and that of your men, whenever (ὁππότε κε) you first bring your well-built ship near the island of Thrinacia . . . and you see the grazing cows and the goodly flocks of Helios." His focus here on what Odysseus will see, moreover, also seems to echo, albeit at a distance, those oracles in which sailors coasting along the shore are asked to observe the behavior of animals and then found a city on the spot, in some cases sacrificing the unlucky animals that they find. In this case, however, Thrinacia is tragically unfit for human habitation, as Odysseus

[71] This line is actually omitted in most manuscripts, but printed in most modern editions, presumably because otherwise the speech has no addressee.

[72] "You seek (δίζηαι) a fatherland, but (δὲ) you have a motherland, not a fatherland, a metropolis on the island of Crete" (P&W no. 318); an oracle addressed to some Magnesians, settled in Crete: "You seek (δίζησθε), whether it is better to go back to your fatherland, but (ἀλλὰ) you must sail to another country than your fatherland" (P&W no. 379); "Erginus, . . . late you have come seeking offspring (ἦλθες γενεὴν διζήμενος), but (ἀλλ') even now to the old plough-tree put a new tip" (P&W no. 111).

[73] Suárez de la Torre (1994a) 9–15 points out that an oracle quoted by Pausanias (5.7.3) about the foundation of Syracuse uses formulas found in the *Odyssey*, including lines 106–7 of Tiresias' speech.

and his crew will discover, because it is forbidden to kill the cattle and eat them. Indeed, if they harm the cattle, Tiresias "predicts" (112: τεκμαίρομ')[74] doom for his ship and comrades and more evil for Odysseus himself, if he survives: a late homecoming and the misdeeds of the suitors (112–17). He lays out, in short, the rest of the plot of the *Odyssey*.

But, after predicting the punishment of the suitors and the survival of Odysseus (118), Tiresias unexpectedly commands Odysseus to leave home again and he falls once again into the cadence of an instructional oracle (119–38):

> But whenever (αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν) you kill the suitors in your halls,
> either by stealth or openly with sharp bronze,
> go then indeed (ἔρχεσθαι δὴ ἔπειτα), taking an easy-to-handle oar,
> until you encounter men who do not know the sea,
> And I will tell you an obvious sign (σῆμα) and it will not escape you:
> Whenever (ὁππότε κεν δή) another man on the road upon meeting you
> claims that you have a winnowing fan on your glistening shoulder,
> then indeed (καὶ τότε δὴ), after planting the shapely oar in the earth,
> and making excellent sacrifices to Lord Poseidon—
> a ram, a bull, and a boar that mounts—
> return home (ἀποστείχειν) and sacrifice (ἔρδειν) sacred hecatombs
> to the immortal gods, who inhabit broad heaven,
> absolutely all of them in order. And from the sea to you yourself death
> will come so very gently, that it will kill you
> when you are overcome with plump old age and all around you
> the people will be prosperous. These things I have told you unerringly
> (τὰ δέ τοι νημερτέα εἴρω).

Here, of course, we recognize the two "whenever-clauses" followed by jussive infinitives. The first supplies the "map" by which Odysseus will locate the place where he is to establish an inland sanctuary for Poseidon, and the second includes a trigger similar to those discussed earlier: when someone misidentifies his oar as a winnowing fan, a seemingly random event, much like coming upon a cow marked with a crescent moon.[75] We also see, as we did in Circe's speech, the detailed description of the sacrifices for inaugurating the shrine and then the promise to perform hecatombs when he returns home. And again, as in Circe's instructions, Tiresias ends his advice with a pair of predictions in the future tense: after Odysseus makes the final hecatomb sacrifice, he will die peacefully at a ripe old age and his people will be prosperous. The poet, indeed, frames the entire speech as oracular, when he begins it by having Odysseus address Tiresias as a "blameless seer"

[74] An unusual meaning for this verb; see LSJ s.v., who cite this passage.

[75] For a detailed account, see Peradotto (1990) 438–43; Reinhardt (1996) 113 notes how this speech "ends in the style of an oracle."

(11.99: μάντις ἀμύμων) and then closes it by describing the prophet's return to Hades, "after he had pronounced his prophecies" (11.153: ἐπεὶ κατὰ θέσφατ' ἔλεξεν)."[76]

In *Odyssey* 4, Menelaus' encounter on a desert island with Eidothea and eventually her father, Proteus, also includes oracular sessions, where we again see signs of narrative doubling. When he first meets the nymph Eidothea "alone apart from [his] comrades" (4.367), just as Odysseus does when he speaks to Circe, Eidothea begins the conversation by insulting him for his feebleminded-ness and sloth (371–74). He responds by asking the following (379–81):

> ἀλλὰ σύ πέρ μοι εἰπέ, θεοὶ δέ τε πάντα ἴσασιν,
> ὅς τίς μ' ἀθανάτων πεδάᾳ καὶ ἔδησε κελεύθου,
> νόστον θ', ὡς ἐπὶ πόντον ἐλεύσομαι ἰχθυόεντα.
>
> But tell me—for the gods know all things—
> who of the immortals fetters me here, and has hindered me from my path
> and tell me of my return, how I may go over the fish-filled sea.

Eidothea's initial response ("Then, indeed, I shall tell you everything frankly") suggests that she is about to answer him directly, but instead she explains that he must capture her father, Proteus, by stealth and put those same questions to him, a move that, as scholars have noted, prefigures Circe's advice to Odysseus to seek out Tiresias.[77]

She tells Menelaus how to capture Proteus, warning him that her father will attempt to evade his grasp by shifting shapes. She then ends her long speech with the "whenever-then" formula followed by commands in the infinitive (420–24):

> ἀλλ' ὅτε κεν δή σ' αὐτὸς ἀνείρηται ἐπέεσσι,
> τοῖος ἐὼν οἷόν κε κατευνηθέντα ἴδησθε,
> καὶ τότε δὴ σχέσθαι τε βίης λῦσαί τε γέροντα,

[76] The poet gives Circe one additional prophetic speech in the *Odyssey* and it is entirely unexpected. When Odysseus and his crew return to her island after their meeting with Tiresias, the goddess takes Odysseus alone into the night and gives him further instructions: how to evade the Sirens and survive Scylla and Charybdis and how they must refrain from eating the Cattle of the Sun (12.37–141). Her speech repeats some of Tiresias' instructions and some scholars have argued that it belongs to some variant performance of the *Odyssey*, in which the visit to Hades was elided entirely (see above, n. 6), but in fact Tiresias predicted only Odysseus' troubles with the Cattle of the Sun, without mentioning the two other threats. This final speech of Circe's, moreover, alternates between descriptive future verbs and imperatives, but lacks the generic oracular vocabulary or syntax that permeated her first speech. The morning after, however, Odysseus does indeed describe her advice as oracular, when he prepares his men for the difficult voyage ahead (12.154–55): "Friends, it is not necessary that one or two alone should know the oracles (*thesphata*), which Circe spoke to me, but I will tell you. . . ." Here Odysseus uses the same word *thesphata* ("oracles") that was used to describe Tiresias' speech and the predictions of both the Cyclopean seer and Alcinoos' father (see note 16 above).

[77] *Od*. 4. 384–93, with Reinhardt (1996) 105–8.

ἥρως, εἴρεσθαι δέ, θεῶν ὅς τίς σε χαλέπτει,
νόστον θ᾽, ὡς ἐπὶ πόντον ἐλεύσεαι ἰχθυόεντα.

But whenever, indeed, he of his own will speaks and questions you
in that shape in which you saw him laid to rest,
then indeed, hero, cease from force, and set the old man free,
and ask him who of the gods is angry with you,
and of your return, how you may go over the fish-filled sea.

Here, too, one can see in what follows the possibility of an earlier version of this scene, in which Eidothea simply gave Menelaus the instructions he needed. This possibility is most obvious in the fact that the hero directs the same three-verse inquiry to Proteus that he had previously directed to Eidothea (468–70 = 420–24).

Proteus responds immediately (472–80):

ἀλλὰ μάλ᾽ ὤφελλες Διί τ᾽ ἄλλοισίν τε θεοῖσι
ῥέξας ἱερὰ κάλ᾽ ἀναβαινέμεν, ὄφρα τάχιστα
σὴν ἐς πατρίδ᾽ ἵκοιο πλέων ἐπὶ οἴνοπα πόντον.
οὐ γάρ τοι πρὶν μοῖρα φίλους τ᾽ ἰδέειν καὶ ἱκέσθαι
οἶκον ἐυκτίμενον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
πρίν γ᾽ ὅτ᾽ ἂν Αἰγύπτοιο, διιπετέος ποταμοῖο,
αὖτις ὕδωρ ἔλθῃς ῥέξῃς θ᾽ ἱερὰς ἑκατόμβας
ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσι·
καὶ τότε τοι δώσουσιν ὁδὸν θεοί, ἣν σὺ μενοινᾷς.᾽

But surely you ought to have made choice offerings to Zeus and the other gods
before embarking (i.e., at Troy), in order that with the greatest speed
you might have come to your country, sailing over the wine-dark sea.
For it is not your fate to see your friends, and reach
your well-ordered household and your native land,
before you have come, in turn, to the waters of Aegyptus, the heaven-fed river,
and have offered holy hecatombs to the immortal gods who hold broad heaven.
Then at length shall the gods grant you the journey you desire.

The content of these verses has much in common with traditional oracles about the future: Proteus identifies the angry gods and advises Menelaus to sail to nearby Egypt and placate them with hecatombs. The syntactical form of the last six lines is also a fairly common oracular variant: "for not indeed (οὐ γάρ τοι πρὶν) will *X* happen, before (πρὶν) *Y* happens." Note, for example, an oracle that the Pythia allegedly gave to the Spartans during the Persian invasion: "for the might of bulls and lions (i.e., the Athenians and the Spartans) will not stay him (i.e., the king of Persia), before (πρὶν) he has destroyed one of the two!" or another about a drawn-out military siege: "Never (οὔποτε) will the war end, before (πρὶν) you send a tripod. . . ."[78]

[78] P&W nos. 100 and 248.

At this point the consultation with Proteus might have ended, but then Menelaus unexpectedly asks about the homecomings of the other Achaean heroes. The god responds with a pair of miniature homecoming narratives about Ajax (499–511) and Agamemnon (512–37) and then briefly adds that he once saw Odysseus stranded on Calypso's island (555–60). These additions have no parallels with extant oracles, of course, because they are all in the past tense. At the very end, however, Proteus, unprompted, switches to the future tense and predicts Menelaus' fate (561–63): "There is no prophecy (*thesphaton*) for you to die, . . . but rather the gods will transport you to the Elysian fields."

Scholars have, as was mentioned earlier, noted the many parallels between these consultations of Odysseus and Menelaus:

	Odysseus	**Menelaus**
Initial inquiry with female prophet	Circe's advice on travel and raising Tiresias' ghost	Eidothea's advice on capturing Proteus
Second inquiry with male prophet	Tiresias' predictions and advice for an inland sanctuary for Poseidon	Proteus' advice to travel to Egypt and sacrifice
Unexpected stories about comrades	Conversations with Achilles and others in the underworld	Short narratives about Ajax and Agamemnon; eyewitness account of Odysseus alive
Unasked prophecy about personal fate	Long life and death in old age	Elysian Fields

In both sequences, we saw signs of an earlier and simpler version, in which an epichoric female (Circe or Eidothea) might have given the necessary advice directly to the hero in question, but in the monumental *Odyssey*, although the poet begins with these initial encounters, he then sends the heroes to more knowledgeable male prophets, (Proteus and Tiresias), who give the requested advice, but also provide additional, unrequested information that allows the poet to touch on the broader Panhellenic themes of the unhappy homecomings of their comrades and the happy fates of the inquirers. It has been noted, for example, that Proteus' knowledge of the three other *nostoi* makes sense for a sea deity, who presumably knows everything that happens on or near the water, and, indeed, he says that he himself "saw" Odysseus

on Calypso's island.[79] But his subsequent prediction of Menelaus' happy future does not make much sense within the confines of the scene, but only in the larger narrative frame of the poem. In *Odyssey* 11, of course, the hero begins with a necromantic session near the entrance to Hades, at which Tiresias does indeed deliver the necessary information; but then the scene transforms into an unexpected parade of heroic ghosts, male and female, during which Odysseus also learns about the fates of his family and the tragic homecomings of his comrades.

4.5 The Earliest Sibylline Oracles

We return, finally, to Circe and to the early evidence for specifically female oracular speech. For starters, there is a growing consensus, mentioned earlier, that the female Pythias at Delphi were orally composing poets, at least in the archaic and early-classical periods.[80] More importantly, perhaps, hexametrical oracles were also being composed in these periods by women called "Sibyls" living independently in the coastal areas near ancient Troy, where the Homeric poems first took shape. Authors of the classical period tell us that at least two legendary Sibyls lived and gave prophecies in this region, one on the island of Samos, and a second who lived either in Erythrae or in the Troad itself.[81] Pausanias names this second Sibyl "Herophile," who, he claims, "was clearly born before the Trojan War, because she foretold in her oracles that the Greeks would capture Troy."[82]

She apparently also gave oracles after the fall of the city. Readers of Vergil will recall the two famous omens that guide Aeneas in his successful foundation of the city of Alba on the Italian peninsula: it could happen only after he and his men ate their tables and after a white sow with thirty piglets guided them to the precise locale. In Book 3 of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas receives these oracles from two different sources, and he does so *after* he departs from Anatolia,[83]

[79] Reinhardt (1996) 106.

[80] See notes 8–9 above.

[81] Parke (1988) 51–70, and more recently Suárez de la Torre (1994b) 199 ("Plusieurs sources visent à accorder une remarquable antiquité aux Sibylles de la Troade") and Bremmer (1996) 102–3: "the Sibyl came originally from Asia Minor."

[82] Pausanias 10.12.1–2

[83] Both prophecies occur in *Aeneid* 3: (i) on the island of the Harpies, Celaeno reports a prophecy that she received from Phoebus that Aeneas and his men would never be granted a city in Italy until hunger drove them to eat their plates (3.301–10); and (ii) at Chaonia in Epirus the transplanted Trojan seer Helenus proclaims, while inspired by Apollo, that, whenever they find on a river bank a white sow with thirty piglets, that will be the place to found his new city (3.460–68).

but earlier Greek traditions claim that he received both oracles in the Troad immediately after the destruction of Troy. The Hellenistic author Lycophron, for example, in his long prophetic poem *Alexandra*, puts both of these prophecies into the mouth of Cassandra while she was still living in Troy,[84] whereas Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a contemporary of Vergil's, makes the Erythraean Sibyl the source and gives us a paraphrase of her version:[85]

> For a certain oracle had been delivered to them, as some say, in Dodona, but, according to others, in Erythrae, a place on Mount Ida, where lived a Sibyl of that country, a prophetic nymph, who ordered them to sail westward till they came to a place where they should eat their tables; and that, whenever (ὅταν) they found this had happened, they should make a four-footed beast their guide (ἡγεμόνα τετράποδα ποιησαμένους), and wherever (ὅπου) the animal grew wearied, there (ἐνταῦθα) they should build a city (δείμασθαι πόλιν).

Given the Greek tradition of colonization oracles described earlier, it makes better sense, of course, that Aeneas would consult an oracle *before* setting out on a potentially dangerous sea voyage. And since Dionysius lived in Halicarnassus, a prosperous Greek city on the Aegean coast of Anatolia, there is an excellent chance that he preserves here a Greek tradition that stresses the role of the local Sibyl in helping the Trojan leader found a new city in the West. Especially interesting, of course, is the oracular language clearly preserved in his prose summary: the "whenever" and "wherever" formulas followed by direct commands in the infinitive, and especially the designation of the "four-footed beast" as Aeneas' *hêgemôn*.

We have additional evidence, in fact, that the Sibyls gave this kind of practical advice, and it comes from an unlikely source: the Sibylline oracles composed in Greek, which the Romans allegedly took from Cumae and to which they referred in times of bad omen, pestilence, or stress.[86] Modern scholars suggest, in fact, that the Cumaean Sibyl, or at least the oracles attributed to her, had originally been brought to Cumae from Erythrae or Samos.[87] The

[84] Parke (1988) 75.

[85] Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.55.4 in the translation of Cary (1937).

[86] I am grateful to John Scheid for alerting me to this material and giving me the requisite bibliography.

[87] See, e.g., the summary in Suárez de la Torre (1994b) 201, who concludes thus: "d'un premier centre 'sibylline' en Troade . . . cette tradition serait passée aux territoires ioniens (Érythrées) et ensuite à Samos au cours du V^ie^siècle. À leur tour les Samiens auraient emporté la tradition sibylline en Italie (Cumes)."

original Greek texts of these oracles rarely survive, of course, but one famous example provided a blueprint for re-founding the Secular Games at Rome in the time of Augustus. Phlegon, an erudite freedman of Hadrian, claims that this oracle was originally uttered by the Erythraean Sibyl[88] and the text he quotes begins with the "whenever" formula followed by five infinitives that advise the Romans to make sacrifices to several deities and to perform other kinds of appeasement rituals:[89]

> Whenever (ἀλλ' ὅποτ' ἄν) the longest span of life for humans passes,
> having journeyed its cycle of a hundred and ten years,
> remember (μεμνῆσθαι), Roman, even if it escapes your notice,
> remember (μεμνῆσθαι) all these things: sacrifice (ῥέξειν)
> to the immortal gods on the field along the boundless waters of the Tibur,
> at its narrowest point, when night comes upon the earth
> and the sun has hidden its own light. And there sacrifice (ἔνθα δὲ ῥέξειν)
> dark sheep and goats to the all-generating Moirai.
> And also appease (ἀρέσασθαι) the childbirth-promoting Eileithyia
> with offerings in the proper way.

At this point the oracle switches to the optative and imperative modes to give instructions for sacrifices to the Earth and the Olympian gods, as well as paean-singing and lustrations—in sum, there are thirty-five lines of technical ritual instructions and not a single prediction.[90] We know, moreover, from other sources that these instructions were carefully followed by the Romans in the time of Augustus and then repeated during the Imperial Period at intervals of 110 years.[91] Diels pointed out long ago that these rituals are clearly all Greek, both in the names of their recipients and in the types of rituals, for example, the black victims for the Moirai and Gaia or the young steer for Phoebus Apollo.[92]

In even earlier, Republican times, Sibylline oracles were consulted from this same collection and they, too, focus primarily on ritual remedies:[93] Livy,

[88] Graf (1985) 343–44, who also notes that when the Sibylline oracles kept in Rome were lost in a fire, the Senate apparently replaced them with texts brought in from Erythrae, not Cumae.

[89] This is the translation of Hanson (1996) 56–57. The third verse looks like an awkward attempt to refocus an older Greek oracle on a new Roman audience.

[90] "And, in turn, let a black sow swollen with piglets be sacrificed to Gaia, and let all-white bulls be led to the altar of Zeus by day, not by night, because sacrifices are performed in daylight to the Ouranian gods. In this way must you yourself sacrifice. Let Hera's shining temple receive a young steer from you and let Phoebus Apollo, who is also called Helios, receive equal victims, . . . etc." (all in dactylic hexameters).

[91] See the summaries of older literature—beginning with Diels's groundbreaking 1890 study—in Hanson (1996) ad loc. and Scheid (1998) 11–17.

[92] Diels (1890).

[93] Zosimos, for example, in his discussion of the precursors to the Secular Games, recalls a simpler command of the oracle (*Hist. Nova* 2.1): "When they were oppressed with diseases and wars, which was in the year 352 after the building of the city, the Senate endeavored to deliver themselves from

for example, records a number of instances in the late third century BCE in which the Roman Senate consulted the Sibylline books, for example, during Hannibal's invasion of Italy, when at the Sibyl's advice they brought the "Idaean Mother" and her strange rites from Pessinus and installed them in Rome.[94] There was also the time when two of the Vestal Virgins were seduced and, after the Sibylline books were consulted, an envoy was sent to Delphi to ask if the rites recommended by the Sibyl were sufficient.[95] In all of these instances, however, although the Greek text of the oracles does not survive, it seems clear that they did not *predict* anything in the future, but rather that they gave detailed instructions for a ritual solution to a looming crisis. And in the case of the oracle about Hannibal, Livy's paraphrase suggests that it, too, began with the familiar mantic cliché: "whenever a foreign enemy invades Italy. . . ."[96]

Phlegon does, in fact, preserve the full Greek text of two additional Sibylline oracles that the Romans repeatedly consulted in Republican times in order to expiate the evil omen signaled by the birth of a hermaphrodite. These hexametrical verses are too numerous to be quoted in full, but even in brief summary we can see that they provided numerous instructions for the rituals necessary to expiate the evil omen:[97]

First Oracle. Collect money to offer to Demeter (10–12); sacrifice twenty-seven bulls to Zeus or perhaps to Demeter (13); maidens sacrifice white cows and in the Greek manner supplicate "the Queen" (i.e., Hera, 13–18); matrons offer thrice as many libations (18–19), torches for Demeter (20–21), and triple libations (21–23); maidens offer the same to Persephone and make supplications (24–28); youths and maidens offer money (29).

Second Oracle. Offer clothing to Persephone (30–31) and "the most beautiful thing in the world" (32–34); sacrifice a black ox to Hades after procession of men in festive attire (37–40); keep disbelievers away from the sacrifices (41–43); men sacrifice the youngest of goats to Phoebus

those calamities by means of the oracles of the Sibyls, and therefore commanded those whose office it was to consult those oracles. Having so done they told the Senate, that by sacrificing to Pluto and Proserpine an end would be put to all their miseries. . . ."

[94] Potter (1990) 111, discussing Livy 29.10.4–6.

[95] Potter (1990) 110–11, discussing Livy 21.61, 22.1 and 22.57.4–5.

[96] Potter (1990) 111, discussing Livy 29.10.4.

[97] These summaries derive from den Boer (1979) 103–10 and MacBain (1982) 127–35, who both follow Diels (1890).

> (44–47) and with garlanded heads and as suppliants pray to him as Phoebus Paean and beseech him for a release from the impending evil (48–49); sacrifice a white cow to Hera (50–51) as the women hymn her (52); libations and other daily offerings to Hera (58–60); sacrifice sheep and wineless offerings to the chthonic gods (61); and at the very end the first and only prediction: "whenever you have great temples of Hera everywhere and whenever there are hewn images and the other things I have said . . . then [you will find] a release from evils" (63–69).

These oracles and especially the acrostics embedded in them can be dated no earlier than the fourth century BCE, and the ritual instructions in them were apparently assiduously followed by the Romans.[98] The structure of the second oracle is, in fact, quite similar to the "script" portion of Circe's advice: a long series of instructions about which rituals to employ, followed by brief predictions at the very end that these rituals will produce the desired effects.

Finally, scholars have noted that four verses from the second of these oracles seem to quote a much earlier prophecy, one that follows the pattern of instructional oracles laid out earlier in this chapter (lines 53–56): "Whenever (ὅτ' ἄν) the inhabitants of the islands earnestly settle in the Cumaean land of their opponents, by force and not deceit, then for the holy queen Hera let them establish (τιθέντων) in the ancestral manner a carved image and a temple." As Diels and others have noted, this oracle seems to date to the eighth century BCE, when the Euboean Greeks abandoned their trading emporia on Pithecusae and other offshore islands and founded the first Greek city on the Italian peninsula, along with its famous temple to Hera.[99] In this case, too, scholars assume that the Sibyl who uttered this prediction was believed to be the Erythraean one living in the Troad.[100] Here, however, I should stress again that it makes no difference to my argument whether any of these Sibylline oracles were actually of archaic date, but only that the Romans were convinced of their antiquity and Sibylline authorship and that they seem to follow the same traditional pattern that we have seen throughout this chapter: a conditional trigger ("whenever" or "wherever")

[98] Diels (1890) dated the first to 207 BCE and the second to 200 BCE. He also notes that they were consulted again in 125 BCE when another hermaphrodite was born. For this last consultation, MacBain (1982) 135 has argued for the earlier date of 133 BCE.

[99] Diels (1890) ad loc.

[100] Ibid.

followed by advice—usually in the infinitive—to install new rituals of the Greek type and in one case to establish a new city at Cumae with an image and temple of Hera.

4.6 Summary

I have argued that the poet of the *Odyssey* casts Circe in the role of a local female prophet, who gives Odysseus navigational and ritual instructions that in content and form are quite similar to those hexametrical oracles given to colonists before they embark on their voyage. In doing so, I have used, as a model, Martin's description of her advice as a speech-act comprised of a map and a script, although I have narrowed his approach significantly to argue that, rather than simply reflecting or mimicking speeches of advice in prose, the *Odyssey* poet seems to be using as his model the traditional hexametrical genre of oracular instructions (which include colonization oracles), whose linguistic hallmarks are especially prominent in the advice that Circe and Tiresias give Odysseus. I have suggested, moreover, that Circe's role in the poem reflects a neglected tradition of local Sibylline prophecy in the coastal areas of Anatolia, where the Homeric poems first took shape. And we saw as well that both versions of the "Orphic" gold tablets share a number of features with these instructional oracles. Therefore, it stands to reason that, if the oracle collections of Musaeus or Epimenides had survived, they, too, would have probably contained examples of the "whenever-then" cliché, the claims to "command," and many of the other oracular phrases and vocabulary discussed above.

But how, then, might we in some detail describe this early genre of instructional oracles? As in the case of epichoric hymns, an important feature might have been their length. The oracles quoted by Herodotus or parodied by Aristophanes in the classical period are generally much shorter, often only three to four verses long, as we have seen in some of the examples discussed above, but it seems that this short length may simply reflect the "headless" manner in which they were preserved, usually without the personal address at the start and sometimes even without the initial "whenever" clause.[101] In

[101] As was noted earlier, ancient historians often quote only the parts that are of historical interest and leave off, for example, the salutation and other expected features. See note 26 above for the quoted or parodied oracles that begin abruptly with ἀλλά or adversative δέ and note 29 for the much rarer cases of those quoted without the "whenever" clause.

any event, the surviving examples of instructional oracles are much longer. The two Sibylline oracles about hermaphrodites are twenty-nine and forty verses long and the one that Augustus used to re-found the Secular Games contained thirty-eight. The longer length of instructional oracles makes sense, of course, because, as we have seen, they usually contain much more information than a prediction of a future event. Epic examples of these instructional oracles are of similar length: Circe's instructions are thirty-three verses long, the instructional second part of Tiresias' runs to thirty, and the Delphic oracle allegedly given to Cadmus survives in eighteen verses, lengths that are somewhat longer than those preserved on the three earliest and fullest versions of the B gold tablets, for example, the Hipponion tablet (sixteen), the Petelia (fourteen), and the Entella (twenty-one). The relatively short length of all these instructional oracles helps us imagine, perhaps, the "useful" poems of Musaeus, which Aristophanes describes as "cures for diseases and oracles," or the collected oracles of the Cumaean Sibyl that were repeatedly consulted by the Romans.

The shared poetic form and content of these instructional oracles can be easily summarized by adapting the outline of Fontenrose, who failed, however, to appreciate fully the instructional oracle as a distinct subtype:[102]

Salutation. Includes the petitioner's genealogy and/or city of origin, and sometimes bids him to take heed (e.g., φραζεο);

Restatement. Reiterates the petitioner's question (usually with the verbs αἰτεῖς or δίζεαι) and sometimes preemptively rejects its premises ("but you will never . . .").

Assertion of mantic authority. Claims that Apollo or the prophet "commands" the instructions delivered by the oracle,

Conditional precedent. Sets the conditions ("whenever-then" or "wherever-there") that will the trigger the action, sometimes specifying a "guide" (*hêgemôn*) or a "sign" (*sêma*).

Instructions. Gives commands usually in the infinitive and often in two stages: the "map" gives directions about how to get to a place, sometimes from the perspective of a ship sailing along the coast; and the "script" gives instructions for the rituals or prayers to perform upon arrival.

[102] Fontenrose (1978) 177–81.

Final prediction. Predicts future success, fame, or happiness, if the instructions are carefully followed, for example, Cadmus will become famous, death will come to Odysseus in his old age, (in the gold tablets) "you will rule among the other heroes," or (in the Sibylline oracle regarding the hermaphrodites) "then [you will find] a release from evils".

Few of the texts discussed above contain all of these features, but their intent and rhetorical shape are clear. Instructional oracles are, finally, a somewhat personal one-on-one form of discourse. Unlike the hymns discussed earlier they are usually performed by a single and usually inspired person, a Pythia, Bakis, or Sibyl, in the presence of a single petitioner, often in a special ritual environment, for example, Apollo's sanctuary at Delphi or in the remote caves and places where Sibyls were thought to dwell.

5

Helen's *Pharmakon* as a Disguised Incantation

In the fourth book of the *Odyssey*, Telemachus visits the palace of Menelaus and Helen in Sparta to learn more about the fate of his missing father. When he arrives, the palace is in the midst of an elaborate wedding, a spectacle that causes Telemachus to whisper to a friend that the flash of bronze, gold, electrum, silver, and ivory makes him imagine the kind of "untold wealth that the court of Olympian Zeus must hold" (4.71–75). When Menelaus overhears this remark, he explainss that he brought back all of these riches from his travels after the Trojan War, travels that took him to Cyprus, Phoenicia, Egypt, and other wealthy places in the East. Helen's appearance a few lines later (120–32) does little to alter this deep impression of eastern luxury, especially her golden distaff and silver basket for spinning wool, both of which were presents, we are told, from the wife of Polybus, who dwelt in Egyptian Thebes. After sad talk about the absent Odysseus, they all begin to weep (181–86), and to cheer them up, Helen casts a powerful drug into the wine they are drinking, a drug that was a present from another Egyptian woman (220–32). This drug has its intended effect[1] and the scene recalls, as commentators point out, the traditional misogynistic view of powerful women as witches and poisoners, precisely the scene that the poet presents us with later in the embedded tales, when Circe puts drugs in food and drink to transform Odysseus' men into swine.[2] There remains, however, one additional curiosity. The poet gives a detailed description of the powers of Helen's *pharmakon* that is very similar to later descriptions of the powers of hexametrical poetry and incantations. Here, as we might predict, scholars have usually seen the Homeric passage as the start of the tradition and the subsequent claims about poetry to be metaphoric: poetry, like a drug, can charm and heal. We shall

[1] For at least a century, scholars have used this passage to argue that the Greeks in the early-archaic period knew of the use of opium; see Scarborough (1991) 139–40 for past scholarship. Another possible candidate is the compound Egyptian incense called *kuphi*, which is mildly sedative when taken with wine; see Heubeck, West and Hainsworth (1988) ad loc, who cite Plutarch *de Iside* 80.

[2] See, e.g., Bergren (2008), who cites earlier bibliography.

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see, however, that the key to understanding these parallels is the realization that the word *pharmakon* can refer to both an herbal drug that harms or heals the human body and to a verbal incantation that harms or heals the human mind or soul. In what follows, therefore, I shall argue that the six-line boast about the power of Helen's *pharmakon* reflects and perhaps even quotes a hexametrical incantation originally chanted in dactylic hexameters over wine and that the poet of the *Odyssey* knowingly uses this traditional and boastful form of incantation—something about which his audience would have had some knowledge—to explain the power of Helen's drug from Egypt, something they would not.

This argument could not have been made thirty years ago, when our knowledge of early Greek incantations was quite limited. Since then, we have seen the publication or republication of a number of lead amulets of classical or late-Hellenistic date from Crete, Calabria, and Sicily that give us precise information about the content and generic form of protective incantations cast in dactylic hexameters, especially the so-called "Getty Hexameters," which comprise nearly fifty hexametrical verses of this type.[3] That the poet of the *Odyssey* would be aware of such incantations should not, of course, surprise us, because elsewhere in the *Odyssey* we are told how the sons of Autolykos bound up the wounded thigh of Odysseus and then stopped it from bleeding with an incantation (ἐπαοδῇ δ' αἷμα . . . ἔσχεθον).[4] Unfortunately, in this passage, the poet does not quote the text of this binding spell or describe any attendant ritual, but in the case of Pindar, we are luckier because when he reports how Aphrodite "for the first time ever" taught Jason how to use "supplicatory incantations" (λιτάς τ' ἐπαοδάς) and a *iunx*-wheel to seduce Medea, he describes the latter with some detail, allowing us to see some close parallels with later erotic curses.[5] Other myths about the first Greek curses are similarly deployed to explain and to some degree justify the invention of these spells and their use in daily Greek life. Aeschylus, for instance, enacts on the Athenian stage the "song from the Furies that binds the wits" (*Eumenides* 331: ὕμνος ἐξ'Ερινύων δέσμιος φρενῶν), which aims to disorient Orestes and prevent him from arguing in his own defense during the trial at the end of the play, an etiological scene that explains the origin of binding

[3] Phalasarna, Crete: Jordan (1992) 191–94 and Brixhe and Panayotou (1995); Locri: Jordan (2000b); Himera and Selinus (fragments): Jordan (2000b); Getty Hexameters: Jordan and Kotansky (2011) and Faraone and Obbink (2013); and Attica: Lamont (2015) and O'Connell (2017).

[4] *Odyssey* 19:455–58. Renehan (1992) provides a bibliography and the most recent discussion.

[5] *Pythian* 4.213–19. For discussion see Faraone (1999a) 56–58.

spells launched by litigants in Attica against the mental and speaking faculties of their opponents in the courts of law.[6] Pindar suggests a similar *aition* for yet another kind of curse, when he has the young Pelops pray to Poseidon to bind his deadly rival Oenomaus in an upcoming chariot race, in a story that explains why the Greeks race chariots at the Olympic Games and presumably also why charioteers use binding spells against their rivals.[7] These incantations are, moreover, entirely efficacious: Odysseus' leg stops bleeding, Medea is compelled to run off with Jason, Orestes is unable to defend himself at trial (Apollo must step in), and Oenomaus fails, for the first time, to win his macabre race.

The earliest Greek poets, in short, tell us or show us plainly that orally performed charms—sometimes directly linked with prayer, as in Aphrodite's "supplicatory incantations" or Pelops' prayer at Olympia—were being cast in the days of the heroes and provided etiologies for their later use in Greek culture.[8] Archaic poetry, moreover, shows some knowledge of their generic language and form. Aeschylus, for example, presents the *hymnos desmios* of the Furies as an eerie choral song punctuated by foot-stomping refrains and Pindar has Pelops address his request to Poseidon in three short and alliterative sentences, each containing an aorist imperative of the same shape and accentuation—"shackle (πέδασον) the brazen spear of Oinomaeus, speed me (πόρευσον) upon the swiftest chariots . . . and bring me near (πέλασον) to victory!"—a request that commentators have rightly called incantatory.[9] It is, however, quite unlikely that in composing these lyric and choral poems either poet was thinking of or reflecting a traditional spell or curse sung in lyric meters, because, as we shall see in great detail below, the Greeks down to the Hellenistic period sang incantations almost exclusively in dactylic hexameters.[10]

This chapter will unfold, then, in four sections. Section 5.1 compares the description of Helen's *pharmakon* with boasts about the power of magical

[6] Faraone (1985).

[7] *Olympian* 1.75–78. For a full discussion see Howe (1991) 72–83, who cites the earlier bibliography; cf. also Fisker (1990) ad loc. and Hanson (2000) 25–26. Instone (1996) 109 points out the incantatory alliteration. See Howe (1991) 78–80; Heintz (1998) 40; and Faraone (2019b) for a century-long modern debate about an alternate version of the story in Pausanias (6.20), according to which Pelops buried some magical material near the far turning post of the racetrack, a place where many curse tablets have been discovered in Roman-era racetracks in Rome, Carthage, Hadrumentum, and Antioch.

[8] Graf (1997) 93.

[9] *Olympian* 1.75–78. See note 7 above and Aubriot-Sévin (1992) 266 for discussion.

[10] Faraone (2006b and 2011d).

incantations specifically and of hexametrical poetry more generally. Section 5.2 surveys the ancient evidence for verbal *pharmaka* from Empedocles to Plato, and Section 5.3 compares the use of conditional boasts to describe both the *pharmakon* of Helen and early hexametrical charms. Section 5.4 reveals how Theocritus' mimetic *Idyll* 2 and a series of contemporary Hellenistic curse tablets display many of the same features

5.1 Helen's Herbal *Pharmakon*

Helen, after seeing Telemachus and her other guests grow sad discussing the absent and perhaps deceased Odysseus, places a drug in the wine (*Od.* 4. 220–32):

> αὐτίκ' ἄρ' εἰς οἶνον βάλε φάρμακον, ἔνθεν ἔπινον,
> νηπενθές τ' ἄχολόν τε, κακῶν ἐπίληθον ἁπάντων.
> ὃς τὸ καταβρόξειεν, ἐπὴν κρητῆρι μιγείη,
> οὔ κεν ἐφημέριός γε βάλοι κατὰ δάκρυ παρειῶν,
> οὐδ' εἴ οἱ κατατεθναίη μήτηρ τε πατήρ τε,
> οὐδ' εἴ οἱ προπάροιθεν ἀδελφεὸν ἢ φίλον υἱὸν
> χαλκῷ δηϊόφεν, ὁ δ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὁρῷτο.
> τοῖα Διὸς θυγάτηρ ἔχε φάρμακα μητιόεντα,
> ἐσθλά, τά οἱ Πολύδαμνα πόρεν, Θῶνος παράκοιτις,
> Αἰγυπτίη, τῇ πλεῖστα φέρει ζείδωρος ἄρουρα
> φάρμακα, πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ μεμιγμένα, πολλὰ δὲ λυγρά,
> ἰητρὸς δὲ ἕκαστος ἐπιστάμενος περὶ πάντων
> ἀνθρώπων· ἦ γὰρ Παιήονός εἰσι γενέθλης.
>
> Immediately she cast into the wine they were drinking, a *pharmakon*
> that takes away grief and anger, and brings forgetfulness of every ill.
> Whosoever should drink this down when it is mingled in the mixing bowl,
> would not, in the course of that day at least, let fall a tear down his cheeks,
> not even if his mother and father should lie dead
> nor if before his face someone should slay his brother or son
> with bronze and he saw it with his own eyes.
> Such were the *pharmaka* that the daughter of Zeus owned,
> excellent ones that Polydamna gave to her, the wife of Thon,
> a woman of Egypt, where the life-giving ploughland bore the most
> *pharmaka*, many of which were good, when mixed in, and many baneful.
> Because each (i.e., Egyptian) is a healer knowledgeable beyond all other
> men, for they are indeed of the family of Paean.

At this point it suffices to point out just a few things. First of all, the last six verses stress to an extraordinary degree the Egyptian source of the drug, as well as its close connection with Paean, the Greek god of healing. I should also emphasize that the alleged effects of this drug seem to be entirely psychological or emotional: it can make mortals forget anger and grief. The poet

does not, moreover, describe the power of the *pharmakon* in positive terms—for example, he does not say that it brings joy and serenity. By repeating the negative particle οὐδε at the start of two successive verses (lines 223–24), he focuses instead on how the drug will prevent painful emotions. This passage also contains several rare words, especially two of the adjectives in line 221, νηπενθές ("banisher of suffering") and ἐπίληθον ("causer of forgetfulness"), which never appear again in all of Greek literature, except in passages that clearly imitate this one.[11]

Modern scholars have pointed out how the poet's claim about the psychological power of Helen's *pharmakon* oddly recalls two passages from the Hesiodic *Theogony*,[12] which first describe how Memory bore the nine Muses to be "a forgetfulness of evils and relief from anxieties" (55: λησμοσύνην τε κακῶν ἄμπαυμά τε μερμηράων)[13] and then how the song of a poet inspired by the same Muses has a therapeutic effect on human emotions: [14]

> εἰ γάρ τις καὶ πένθος ἔχων νεοκηδέι θυμῷ
> ἄζηται κραδίην ἀκαχήμενος, αὐτὰρ ἀοιδὸς
> Μουσάων θεράπων κλεῖα προτέρων ἀνθρώπων
> ὑμνήσει μάκαράς τε θεοὺς οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσιν,
> αἶψ' ὅ γε δυσφροσυνέων ἐπιλήθεται οὐδέ τι κηδέων
> μέμνηται· ταχέως δὲ παρέτραπε δῶρα θεάων.
>
> For if someone holding unhappiness in his newly anguished spirit
> is parched and grieving in his heart, yet when a poet,
> servant of the Muses, will sing of the glorious deeds of people of old
> and the blessed gods who possess Olympus,
> at once he, at least, forgets his sorrows and in no way
> recalls his cares, for quickly the goddesses' gifts have turned them aside.[15]

This boast about the extraordinary power of hexametrical narratives, including his own, takes the form, therefore, of a condition focused on a single, hypothetical individual, much like the one mentioned in the description of Helen's *pharmakon*, which has its effect on "whosoever should drink this

[11] Other anomalies: the adjective ἄχολον in the same line, although it does show up elsewhere, appears uniquely here in the active sense of "banisher of anger"; the verb καταβρόξειεν ("to gulp down") in the next line makes its only appearance here in epic; and ἐφημέριός ("during the day") appears in only one other place (*Od*. 21.85);

[12] Bergren (2008).

[13] The full context is (*Theogony* 53–55) "Mnemosyne, ruler of the slopes of Eleuthêr and mingling with their father, son of Kronos, bore them (i.e., the Muses) on Mt. Pieria, to be a forgetfulness of evils and relief from cares." For discussion see Walsh (1984) 22–24.

[14] Hesiod, *Theogony* 98–103.

[15] For the verb παρατρέπειν, see Maslov (2015) 272 and for the use of the similar verb ἀποστρέφειν in protective incantations, see Faraone (2004d). The emphasis in the final two verses on the speedy effects of song (αἶψα and ταχέως) is typical in later incantations, especially in erotic curses, where we often find the doubled expressions "quickly, quickly, now, now"; Faraone (1999a) 136–37.

down." It is usually suggested that in this passage the Hesiodic poet makes a claim about the "enchanting" power that all poetry, or indeed fiction generally, has to bewitch the listener and this is, no doubt, one important way to read the passage.[16] Such a claim can, of course, easily be made about the Orpheus' legendary enchantment of the animals, but here the specific focus on driving away bad emotions like unhappiness and grief seems unduly specific for general claims about poetry[17]—surely we need not imagine that the typical Homeric or Hesiodic audience was chronically depressed and unhappy.

As we shall see in what follows, there is now widespread evidence that curative and protective incantations were performed primarily in dactylic hexameters and that they were deemed especially effective in curing anger and other forms of malaise. The late Martin West suggested, in fact, that the poet who composed the *Theogony* had a specific audience or context in mind when he performed these verses: the first performance of the *Theogony* at the funeral for a king, perhaps that of the Amphidamus mentioned in the *Works and Days*. West also collected cross-cultural evidence that cosmogonic or theogonic poems in particular were used to calm anxieties and help a society maintain its stability after a monarchic ruler dies or at other points of transition, such as in a festival for the new year.[18] His best Greek parallel is, in fact, a scene in the first book of the Apollonius' *Argonautica*, where Orpheus, instead of taming the animals, performs a cosmogony in order to calm an angry and potentially violent dispute between two of the heroes.[19] The effect of the song is then described in some detail: [20]

> ἦ, καὶ ὁ μὲν φόρμιγγα σὺν ἀμβροσίῃ σχέθεν αὐδῇ·
> τοὶ δ᾽ ἄμοτον λήξαντος ἔτι προύχοντο κάρηνα
> πάντες ὁμῶς ὀρθοῖσιν ἐπ᾽ οὔασιν ἠρεμέοντες
> κηληθμῷ· τοῖόν σφιν ἐνέλλιπε θελκτὺν ἀοιδῆς.
>
> Thus, he spoke and hushed his lyre along with his ambrosial voice.
> But they incessantly, although he had ceased, still thrust their heads forward,
> all at the same time, with intent ears, immobile
> with enchantment—such was the spell of the song he left within them.

[16] See, e.g., Walsh (1984) 22–36, with earlier bibliography, and Ford (1992) 51–53, who both see pleasure or enchantment at the heart of these claims.

[17] Thalmann (1984) 130 rightly stresses the therapeutic nature of theogonies—"according to Hesiod, poetry heals mental pain"—but then generalizes this pain to all people: "song provides mortals with a means of offsetting the woe that is inevitably part of the human condition."

[18] *Hesiod*: West (1966) 44–45; *Orphic Theogonies*: collected and discussed in West (1983).

[19] *Argonautica* 1.494–515 and for commentary see Mori (2000) 91 and Karanika (2010) 407–8.

[20] *Argonautica* 1.516–19.

The narrative reveals once again how the performance of hexametrical poetry can indeed make anger and strife disappear.

One very late author suggests that the Homeric boast about the power of Helen's *pharmakon* was itself used as part of a bona fide incantation to calm an angry person. According to an anecdote preserved by Iamblichus, Empedocles was once in the midst of performing some other kind of song at the home of a friend, when suddenly an angry young man burst into the room:[21]

> Ἐμπεδοκλῆς δὲ σπασαμένου τὸ ξίφος ἤδη νεανίου τινὸς ἐπὶ τὸν αὐτοῦ ξενοδόχον Ἄγχιτον, ἐπεὶ δικάσας δημοσίᾳ τὸν τοῦ νεανίου πατέρα ἐθανάτωσε, καὶ ἀίξαντος, ὡς εἶχε συγχύσεως καί θυμοῦ, ξιφήρους παῖσαι τὸν τοῦ πατρὸς καταδικαστήν, ὡσανεὶ φονέα, Ἄγχιτον, μεθαρμοσάμενος ὡς εἶχε τὴν λύραν καὶ πεπαντικὸν τὸ μέλος καὶ κατασταλτικὸν μεταχειρισάμενος εὐθὺς ἀνεκρούσατο τὸ "νηπενθές τ' ἄχολόν τε, κακῶν ἐπίληθον ἁπάντων" κατὰ τὸν ποιητὸν, καὶ τὸν τε ἑαυτοῦ ξενοδόχον Ἄγχιτον θανάτου ἐρρύσατο καὶ τὸν νεανίαν ἀνδροφονίας.
>
> Empedocles, when a certain youth had already drawn his sword against his host Anchitos, because, as a judge, he (i.e., Anchitos) had publicly condemned the youth's father to death, and as he (i.e., the youth) rushed with sword in hand—since he was confused and angry—to strike his father's condemner (i.e., Anchitos), as if he were a murderer, he (i.e., Empedocles), since he was holding his lyre, changed the mode, administered a soothing and sedating strain, and immediately began the "soother of grief and wrath, oblivion of all ills" (*Od*. 4.221) of the poet (i.e., Homer) and he saved his host Anchitos from death and saved the young man from committing murder.

This is a difficult text and—as the parentheses in the translation reveal—it is not always easy to keep track of the participants and their various roles. It is also unclear precisely how Empedocles prevents the murder. Traditionally scholars have either assumed that he quoted the single Homeric verse as an incantation[22]—a technique that can be documented, however, only in the Roman period[23]—or that Iamblichus, who is in the midst of discussing the Pythagorean use of different musical strains to affect the emotions, is describing only Empedocles' lyre playing and not the words he performed, an interpretation that yields strained translations such as: "Empedocles . . . struck up what Homer calls 'pain-dissolving, anger-reducing' music 'which makes one forget everything bad.' "[24]

[21] Iamblichus *V.Pyth.* 113. Text: Dillon and Hershbell (1991) 136–37.
[22] See, e.g., Heim no. 115 ad loc.
[23] Faraone (1996) 83–86.
[24] See, e.g., Wright (1981) 11 and Inwood (2001) 157, who translates (as his Testimonia A15) "Empedocles . . . struck up what Homer calls 'pain-dissolving, anger-reducing' music 'which makes

Nowhere, however, do ancient authors discuss the lyre-playing talent of Empedocles, but only his hexametrical verses. It is quite possible, of course, that Iamblichus misunderstood the anecdote in his source to refer only to music, but why would Empedocles have "quoted" Homer's verses at this point? Are we to believe that in quick succession the angry and murderous young man recognized the Homeric source of the quotation and suddenly changed his mind? There is, in fact, as we shall see in the next section, a much easier explanation: because Empedocles himself was a talented poet and boasts that he was a famous composer of incantations, it is likely that he, at this dangerous moment in time, simply recalled a well-known hexametrical charm, which was cited in Iamblichus' source by its *incipit* as the "soother of grief and wrath, oblivion of all ills." Iamblichus, however, who knew this verse only from the *Odyssey*, cited it as a Homeric quotation, prompted, no doubt by the Roman-period habit mentioned above of using single Homeric verses as charms. On this reading, Empedocles performs a traditional hexametrical charm and the anger disappears. And, indeed, the specific emotional state of Anchitos' would-be murderer—having recently witnessed, presumably, his father's execution—perfectly fits the boastful claims about Helen's *pharmakon*: "not even if . . . his father should lie dead." The question arises, of course, whether a description or boast about the power of an incantation suffices as its content. We shall see below in Section 5.3, in fact, that the poets who inscribed protective or curative incantations on the lead amulets from Crete, Calabria, and Sicily regularly use similar boasts as the central part of their own protective charms, so it is quite possible that the poet of the *Odyssey* knew a traditional Greek hexametrical charm beginning with the words νηπενθές τ' ἄχολόν τε, which he adapted to enhance his own claims for the special power of Helen's Egyptian drug. Such an approach, of course, turns the metaphor around: the effect of hexametrical verse is not similar to that of Helen's herbal *pharmakon*, but rather her drug has a power similar to that of hexametrical verse.

one forget everything bad.'" The Greek is admittedly vague, but there are clearly three different actions described here: changing the mode (μεθαρμοσάμενος); playing the lyre (μεταχειρισάμενος); and starting up (ἀνεκρούσατο) something else, i.e., singing. The final verb ἀνεκρούσατο, originally used to indicate the beginning of lyre playing (literally "to strike up [the lyre]"), is used as early as Pindar to indicate the beginning of a song; see West (1982) 122 with n. 58 and Obbink (1993) 80 n. 67 for recent discussions.

5.2 Hexametrical *Pharmaka* from Empedocles to Plato

According to Homeric usage, *pharmaka* are nearly always herbal, described either as "helpful," in which case we understand them to be curative drugs or remedies, or as "baneful," in which case they are "poisons."[25] They are, moreover, (as we saw above) often said to be the expertise of the god Paean, who on different occasions cured Hades and Ares by "smearing on pain-killing *pharmaka*" (*Iliad* 5.401 and 900).[26] In the classical period, however, another meaning of *pharmaka* can be detected: in addition to herbal "drugs," it can also mean verbal "incantations" that have similarly wide applications, depending on the adjectives that are applied: beneficial charms that can both protect and cure, as well as curses that can harm.[27] This second meaning is well illustrated in the Getty Hexameters, the recently published hexametrical poem from Sicily,[28] which, like the Homeric poems, closely connects the invention of *pharmaka* with the god Paean, who is, in fact, invoked four times in a series of refrains or rubrics that punctuate the text:[29]

> Παιήων—σὺ δὲ παντόσ' ἀλέξιμα φάρμακα πέμπεις
> καὶ τάδε φωνήσας ἔπε' ἀθάνατα θνητοῖσιν·(6–7)
>
> Paieon—(I invoke your name) because[30] you send protective incantations in every direction, after indeed you uttered[31] the following immortal verses for the sake of mortal men (followed by the thirteen-verse hexametrical incantation in lines 8–20)
>
> [Παιήων,] σὺ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἀλεξιμὰ φάρμα[κα πέμπεις]. (23)
>
> [Paieon,] for you yourself [send] protective incantations! (followed by the eight-verse hexametrical incantation in lines 24–31)

[25] See LSJ s.v.

[26] Rutherford (2013) 161.

[27] See LSJ s.v. and Gregory (2013) 175, who notes that LSJ include in their definition "enchanted potion, philtre: hence charm, spell."

[28] The lead tablet is usually assumed to come from Selinus; see the essays in Faraone and Obbink (2013). Cingano (2018) 16–20, however, has recently suggested Himera.

[29] Faraone and Obbink (2013) ad loc. For the importance of the Getty Hexameters in reconstructing the early history of hexametrical incantations, see Faraone (2006b and 2011d) and Cingano (2018) 27–28.

[30] The syntax here is admittedly cramped and telegraphic: a vocative followed by a separate sentence introduced by "explanatory δέ," as is suggested by the last iteration, where the δέ is replaced by γάρ. See Race (2000) for the use of explanatory δέ.

[31] There are two ways to the divide the words in the first half of this verse: (i) καὶ τάδε φωνήσας ἔπε' (as above), where καὶ is adverbial and φωνήσας is an aorist participle; or (ii) καὶ τάδ' ἐφώνησας ἔπε', where καὶ introduces a new sentence: "and you uttered these verses." The first possibility makes slightly better sense of the present tense of πέμπεις in line 6: "you are sending protective charms, after/because you uttered (i.e., orally composed/invented) them for the sake of humankind." The second possibility is less attractive: "Paieon—(I invoke your name) because you send protective incantations in every direction and (because) you (once) uttered. . . ."

[Παιήων σὺ δ]ὲ πάντοσ᾽ ἀκεσσφόρος ἐσσὶ καὶ ἐσθ[λός] (32)

[Paieon, for you] in every direction are cure-bringing and excellent (followed by the prose incantation in lines 33–41)

[Πα]ι[ή]ων ὁ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἀλεξιμὰ φάρμακα πέ[μπει]. (47)

[Pa]i[e]on, for he himself sends protective incantations! (followed by the incomplete hexametrical incantation that starts in line 48)

These refrains, then, claim Paeon, not as the inventor of herbal *pharmaka*, but rather as the composer or source of incantatory verses (*pharmaka*) that were beneficial to mortals. This meaning is made clear by the triple repetition of the adjective ἀλεξιμὰ, a word that means "protective" or "aversive" and implies that the verses ward off dangers and troubles when spoken aloud. Paieon's goal, moreover, is to help humankind, as we can see in the first instance alone, where the unique added verse says specifically that he "uttered the following immortal verses (τάδε φωνήσας ἔπε᾽ ἀθάνατα) for the sake of mortal men." But the third refrain at line 38 focuses on Paieon himself, rather than his *pharmaka*, and describes him with a different adjective as an excellent "bringer of cures" (*akesphoros*), suggesting that in this case, at least, the prose incantation that follows was curative, rather than protective. These verses dramatically alter, of course, our traditional thinking about Paean, as a god closely aligned with herbal *pharmaka*. But, as we saw earlier in the discussion of the paean sung at the sanctuary of Apollo Smintheus (Section 3.1), this god was also a patron and an embodiment of an early genre of protective compositions, sometimes in hexameters, that ask Apollo to protect young men in times of plague and other disasters.[32]

The Getty Hexameters also shed new light on the incantatory ambitions of the Sicilian poet Empedocles, who made the following claims about what his protégé Pausanias might learn from him (Frag. 101):[33]

φάρμακα δ᾽ ὅσσα γεγᾶσι κακῶν καὶ γήραος ἄλκαρ
πεύσῃ, ἐπεὶ μούνῳ σοὶ ἐγὼ κρανέω τάδε πάντα.
παύσεις δ᾽ ἀκαμάτων ἀνέμων μένος, οἵ τ᾽ ἐπὶ γαῖαν
ὀρνύμενοι πνοιαῖσι καταφθινύθουσιν ἄρουραν·
καὶ πάλιν, ἢν ἐθέλῃσθα, παλίντιτα πνεύματ᾽ ἐπάξεις·
θήσεις δ᾽ ἐξ ὄμβροιο κελαινοῦ καίριον αὐχμὸνἀν

[32] Rutherford (2013).

[33] Wright 101 = Diels-Kranz 111 = Inwood 15 is quoted in full by Diogenes Laertius 8.59. For a more detailed discussion of this translation see Faraone (2019d). I should say at the outset that the recent debate set in motion by the publication of the Strasbourg papyrus concerning the number or titles of Empedocles' poems need not detain us, because in what follows I give a close reading of only this fragment of his poetry, without any discussion of its place in his corpus. For the debate, see Martin and Primavesi (1999); Inwood (2001) 8–21; and Kingsley (2002).

θρώποις, θήσεις δὲ καὶ ἐξ αὐχμοῖο θερείου
ῥεύματα δενδρεόθρεπτα, τάτ αἰθέρι ναιετάουσι,[34]
ἄξεις δ᾽ ἐξ Ἄϊδαο καταφθιμένου μένος ἀνδρός.

Pharmaka, however many are a defense against evils and old age,
you will learn, since for you alone I shall accomplish all of these things.
You will (i.e., for example) stop the strength of the weariless winds, which
rise up along the earth and lay waste to cultivated land with their blasts,
and again, if you want, you will lead the winds back.
And out of black rain you will make a timely drought
for men, and out of a summer drought you will make
tree-nourishing streams, that dwell(?) in the air.
And you will lead from Hades the strength of a dead man.

Diels admitted that one could sum up the contents of this fragment as "magic" and then he proceeded to bury it at the very end of his edition; others have followed suit.[35] Van Groningen, for his part, described it as "pure magic," and he even declared it a forgery.[36] And at least one ancient author also designated such activities as "magic": the author of the Hippocratic diatribe *On the Sacred Disease* (4.1) condemns "magicians, purifiers, charlatans and quacks (μάγοι τε καὶ καθάρται καὶ ἀγύρται καὶ ἀλαζόνες)" who "profess to know how to bring down the moon, to eclipse the sun, to make storm and sunshine, rain and drought, the sea impassable and the earth barren, and all such wonders."[37] Empedocles' boasts, then, are in partial accord with those of other itinerant "sorcerers" of the fifth century BCE.[38]

And in fact, one of Empedocles' ancient biographers understood that the word *pharmaka* in Frag. 101 did, indeed, refer to incantations. Just before Diogenes Laertius quotes the fragment in full, he reports the following:[39]

φησὶ δὲ Σάτυρος ἐν τοῖς Βίοις ὅτι καὶ ἰατρὸς ἦν καὶ ῥήτωρ ἄριστος. Γοργίαν γοῦν τὸν Λεοντῖνον αὐτοῦ γενέσθαι μαθητήν, ἄνδρα ὑπερέχοντα ἐν ῥητορικῇ καὶ Τέχνην ἀπολελοιπότα . . . τοῦτόν φησιν ὁ Σάτυρος λέγειν ὡς αὐτὸς

[34] I print the conjecture of Bollack (1965–69) ad loc. The best MSS have τάτ αἰθέρι ναιήσονται. Wilamowitz and Gallavotti print τά ᵀ αἰθέρ(ι) ἀίσσονται. For this translation and the interpretation offered below, see a more detailed account in Faraone (2019d).

[35] Diels (1901) 138, who added, however, that the fragment "suggests nothing more than what science promises to give to its adepts today: information about the laws of nature which will enable one to become their master." Kingsley (1995) 217–18 gives a thorough and justly critical description of the cool reception that modern scholars gave D-K 111.

[36] Van Groningen (1956) 49: "la doctrine . . . est de pure magie: le disciple apprendra à régler les vents, le beau temps et la pluie, à appliquer des rémèdes efficaces contra tous les maux, la décrépitude sénile incluse, et même à rappeler à la vie ceux qui sont déjà entrés dans l'Hades."

[37] *On the Sacred Disease* 4.1; see also 4.31–32: "if a man by incantations and sacrifice will bring the moon down, eclipse the sun, and cause storm and sunshine."

[38] Kingsley (1995) 220. For the Hippocratic attacks on traditional and popular healing, see Laskaris (2002) 33–43 and 97–108 and Carastro (2006) 43–53.

[39] Diogenes Laertius 8.56–59 = Satyrus Frag. 12 *FHG* 3.162. Translation by Hicks (1925).

> παρείη τῷ Ἐμπεδοκλεῖ γοητεύοντι. ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸν διὰ τῶν ποιημάτων ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι τοῦτό τε καὶ ἄλλα πλείω, δι᾽ ὧν φησι· "φάρμακα δ᾽ ὅσσα γεγᾶσι. . . ."
>
> Satyrus in his *Lives* says that he (i.e., Empedocles) was also a healer and an excellent orator: at all events Gorgias of Leontini, a man pre-eminent in oratory and the author of a treatise on the art, had been his pupil. . . . Satyrus quotes this same Gorgias as saying that he himself was present when Empedocles performed magical feats. Nay more: he contends that Empedocles in his poems lays claim to this power and to much more when he says: "*Pharmaka,* however many are. . . ."

It seems clear, therefore, that as early as the third century BCE, the Peripatetic biographer Satyrus believed that in Frag. 101 Empedocles "proclaims" (ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι) his expertise in sorcery. It is impossible to know from this passage precisely what kind of sorcery Gorgias watched Empedocles perform. The Greek verb *goêteuein* is cognate with the lament (*goös*) for the dead and some have argued that *goêteia* originally referred to incantations and rituals designed either to placate the spirits of the dead or to raise them up and use them for cursing or prophecy.[40] Although by the end of the fifth century BCE *goêteia* was also used as blanket term, sometimes derogatory, for sorcery or magic, it seems possible, nevertheless, that Gorgias claimed to have seen Empedocles performing necromancy, which, as we shall see below, allows us to pursue a recent suggestion that Empedocles, in his last promise to Pausanias in Frag. 101, refers to necromancy, when he boasts that he will "lead out from Hades the strength (*menos*) of a dead man."[41]

The syntax of Fragment 101 deserves closer scrutiny. Empedocles begins this passage by claiming that the addressee of his poem, who is elsewhere named Pausanias (literally "he who stops grief or troubles"),[42]

[40] For *goêteia* as necromantic technique and poetry, see Burkert (1962) 44 and Johnston (1999b).

[41] See Van Groningen (1956) 49 (quoted above in note 36) and Gregory (2013) 175, who suggests that the last promise "appears to assert . . . the possibility of necromancy." Kingsley (1994) 188–89 and 225–27 goes further, when he champions Dodds's theory that Empedocles was a shaman figure; he interprets the last verse to mean that Pausanias will learn how to revive the body of a person who had already died. The verb *agein* ("to lead") used here, is, however, commonly used to describe necromancy—that is, the art of leading an incorporeal spirit or soul up from Hades for purposes of divination, a ritual we see enacted already in archaic poetry in the eleventh book of the *Odyssey* and in Aeschylus' *Persians*, where the spirits of Tiresias and King Darius appear afterwards. This is, for example, a common understanding of *psychagôgia*, literally the "leading of souls." If Empedocles were claiming to bring a body back to life, however, he would have boasted that Pausanias would learn how to put the strength or breath of a man back into a corpse, but there is no mention of a body in the passage. Both of these necromantic encounters are triggered, moreover, by special sacrifices and speech-acts; see Eitrem (1928) and Broadhead (1960) 302–9.

[42] The name is formed from παύειν and ἀνίη. In the Roman period it was interpreted as an appropriate name for a doctor as "one who stops pain," but in the archaic and classical periods the second term ἀνίη usually does not connote physical pain in the body, but rather emotional or mental pain, such as grief or sadness; see Gheerbrant (2017) 617–19.

will learn *pharmaka*, an important word, as its placement emphasizes at the very start of the passage. Translators and commentators, taking their cue from Homeric usage and relying on a somewhat limited modern view of Empedocles as a doctor or physician dispensing medicinal herbs, usually translate *pharmaka* as "potions" or "remedies," to take a recent example: "All the potions, which are a defense against evils and old age, you shall learn. . . ."[43] According to this approach, the word *pharmaka* refers only to the first two verses, and the deictic pronoun τάδε at the end of the second line refers back to the *pharmaka* mentioned in the preceding verse. But it is unclear how these "potions" or "drugs" can be protective, rather than curative, because the word *alkar* at the end of the first verse never means "cure" in Greek, but rather "protection" or "defense."[44] A better approach, I suggest, is to understand that τάδε πάντα looks forward, rather than backward: "since for you alone I shall accomplish these (i.e., the following) things." In this case the pronoun refers, as it is translated above, to all of activities that follow, which are therefore to be accomplished by means of *pharmaka*.[45] The traditional reading also does not explain why Empedocles composed lines 3–9 as a complete unit bounded by ring composition:[46] the first and last actions are concerned with manipulating the *menos* of the winds (3) and the *menos* of a dead man (9), a parallel that is underscored by the repetition in the same line position of the words καταφθινύθουσιν (4) and καταφθιμένου (9).

Empedocles, in short, posits in the first two verses a general category of *pharmaka* that are "a defense against evils and old age" and then lists several concrete examples of the evils it will control or avert (destructive winds, drought, and floods). This reading would explain, of course, why Satyrus quoted the whole passage as evidence that Empedocles performed

[43] Inwood (2001) 219. See also Lloyd (1979) 34 and Chitwood (2004) 42 ("You will learn medicines of all kinds"), but Kingsley (1995) 218 is more cautious: "And all the remedies that exist as defense against sufferings and old age: These you will learn. . . ." Most recently Gregory (2013) 175 suggested "remedies" as a translation, rather than "potions," because this "leaves open the possibility that different types of therapy were involved." Both Inwood and Kingsley rightly take all of ὅσσα γεγᾶσι κακῶν καὶ γήραος ἄλκαρ as a relative clause, unlike Laks and Most (2016) loc. cit., who limit the relative clause to ὅσσα γεγᾶσι κακῶν: "As many as are the remedies for ills, and protection against old age—You will learn them, since for you alone I myself will accomplish all this."

[44] Kingsley (1995) 222 notices that the word *pharmakon* also had the broader connotation of "charm" or "spell," but he thought that Empedocles was referring only to incantations used during the collection of curative herbs.

[45] Obbink (1993) 91–92 and Carastro (2006) translate *pharmaka* here as "spells." See the previous note for Kingsley's understanding.

[46] Chitwood (2004) 42.

goêteia, and why the Hippocratic diatribe discussed earlier also describes how some people "by acting as a *magos* and sacrificing (μαγεύων καὶ θύων)" could "bring down the moon, eclipse the sun and create both storm and calm (σελήνην καθαιρήσει καὶ ἥλιον ἀφανιεῖ καὶ χειμῶνα καὶ εὐδίην ποιήσει)."[47] Here, of course, the verb *mageuein* most probably refers to casting a spell that also involved some kind of sacrifice. Empedocles' final verse—"And you will lead from Hades the *menos* of a dead man"—has, however, created the most difficulties for commentators. We might have expected Empedocles to boast in line 1 that his teaching will overcome death, in addition to old age, and indeed scholars have noted how this verse seems to challenge the claim made by the composer of the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* (192–93), that mortals are *unable* to find "a cure for death or a defense against old age (θανάτοιό τ' ἄκος καὶ γήραος ἄλκαρ)."[48] But, as Asclepius once learned, bringing the dead back to life is a dangerous business, and another interpretation is possible: Pausanias will not learn to lead a dead man up from Hades, but only his "strength" (*menos*), a word that could easily refer to a necromantic session, during which the ghost of a dead man is led out of Hades, as we saw in Section 4.2 in the case of Tiresias.[49]

Now we might be tempted to dismiss Empedocles and the Getty Hexameters as evidence for the second meaning of *pharmakon* in the time of Homer, on the grounds that they simply reflect a local Sicilian meaning of the word *pharmakon* unattested elsewhere in the Greek world; but in fact we see this same definition in an extraordinary but neglected passage in Plato's *Laws*, in which one of his characters, the "Athenian Stranger", wrestles with two very different concepts of criminal "pharmacy":[50]

[47] *On the Sacred Disease* 4.31–32.

[48] Kingsley (1995) 222–23 calls it a "flagrant challenge" to the standard Greek view.

[49] The scene in *Odyssey* 11 does not, of course, include any prayer or incantation to force Tiresias to emerge from Hades, but only the blood of the sheep, an absence that worried the scholiast. See Appendix B below for a discussion of the scholia and especially a curious passage, in which Julius Africanus quotes the "missing" lines that he found preserved in Homeric texts in Jerusalem, Nyssa, and Rome.

[50] *Laws* 933a–d in the translation of Bury (1942); see Carastro (2006) 185–86 and (2007) 219–20 for discussion. There is a chance that Plato was influenced here by Gorgias' famous discussion of the power of oratory in his *Defense of Helen*, where he compares drugs and incantations, e.g., "The power of speech over the arrangement of the soul (πρὸς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς τάξιν) is analogous to the power of drugs (τῶν φαρμάκων) over the nature of the body" (14) or "For inspired incantations (ἔνθεοι . . . ἐπῳδαὶ) by means of words are the 'leaders-in' of pleasure (ἐπαγωγοὶ ἡδονῆς) and 'leaders-away' of grief (ἀπαγωγοὶ λύπης), because the power of the incantation (ἡ δύναμις τῆς ἐπῳδῆς), by affecting [lit. "conversing with"] the opinion of the soul, charms and

> A division in our treatment of pharmacy (φαρμακεῖα) is required by the fact that, following the nature of mankind, they are of two distinct types. The type that we have now expressly mentioned (i.e., poisoning) is that in which injury is done to bodies by bodies according to nature. Distinct from this is the type which, by certain means of sorceries, incantations, and binding spells (μαγγανείαις τέ τισι καὶ ἐπῳδαῖς καὶ καταδέσεσι), as they are called, not only persuades (πείθειν) those who attempt to cause injury that they really can do so, but also persuades their victims that they certainly are being injured by those who possess the power to bewitch (γοητεύειν). . . .

The Athenian Stranger, then, begins his disquisition on pharmacy by claiming that material *pharmaka*, such as drugs or poisons, act according to nature, when they attack the physical body of the victim, but he does not go on to say (as we might expect) that verbal *pharmaka* attack some other, nonphysical human part, such as the mind or the soul. But he does imply something of this sort, when he says that the power of this second kind of *pharmaka* lies in the persuasion of both the performer and his victim.[51]

After describing these two very different kinds of crimes concerned with *pharmaka*, the Athenian Stranger quite naturally suggests two kinds of punishment:

> So this statement shall stand as the law about pharmacy: whosoever shall use *pharmaka* (ὃς ἂν φαρμακεύῃ) against any person so as to cause an injury not fatal either to the person himself or to his employees, or so as to cause an injury fatal or not fatal to his flocks or to his hives, if the agent be a doctor, and if he be convicted of pharmacy, he shall be punished by death. . . . And if it be held that a man is acting like an injurer by the use of binding-spells or attraction-spells or incantations (καταδέσεσιν ἢ ἐπαγωγαῖς ἤ τισιν ἐπῳδαῖς) or any such mode of pharmacy, if he be a prophet or diviner (μάντις ὢν ἢ τερατοσκόπος), he shall be put to death. . . .

Here the focus of the verbal *pharmaka* on the non-corporeal elements, as opposed to the bodily, is made even clearer by noting that herbal *pharmaka* can also harm domestic fowl and bees, but the verbal *pharmaka* apparently

persuades and transports it by means of sorcery (γοητείᾳ)" (10). Gorgias does not, however, use the word *pharmakon* to mean both drug and magical charm. For a full discussion, see Faraone (2019d).

[51] Such an interpretation might explain, moreover, why the physical *pharmaka* can harm herd animals and bees (i.e., which are unable to be persuaded by human language), but the verbal *pharmaka* apparently cannot.

cannot, presumably because they have neither a mind nor a soul to attack. Plato's Athenian Stranger would, moreover, condemn to death doctors, if they cause injury with material *pharmaka*, as well as seers and diviners, if they commit other crimes with various sorts of verbal *pharmaka*. The general goal of this imaginary law is, of course, a sound one from a legal point of view, because it punishes those who have professional expertise in each of these kinds of pharmacy, if they should misuse their special knowledge to injure or kill.

Plato, thus, divides his "pharmacy" into two distinct categories:

	Herbal pharmacy	**Verbal pharmacy**
Examples	drugs or poisons	sorceries (*magganeiai*) incantations (*epôidai*) binding spells (*katadeseis*) attraction charms (*epagôgai*)
Effects	injury to persons, flocks, or hives	persuades persons that they can injure or be injured
Professionals	doctor (*iatros*)	prophet (*mantis*) diviner (*teratoskopos*)
Explanation	injury by bodies to bodies "according to nature"	persuasive power

Plato implies, moreover, that in the fourth century, at least, "prophets" and "diviners" were thought to specialize in magical incantations, as well as their usual trade in oracles and divination. This last idea is not, in fact, an isolated claim in the Platonic corpus, because Adeimantus expresses a similar idea in the *Republic* (364b–c):[52] "Wandering priests and prophets (ἀγύρται δὲ καὶ μάντεις) approach the doors of the wealthy and persuade them that . . . , if anyone wishes to injure any enemy of his, for a small outlay he will be able to harm the just and the unjust alike with certain attraction-spells and binding-spells (ἐπαγωγαῖς τισιν καὶ καταδέσμ οις)." In both passages Plato uses the same technical terms—"attraction spells" (*epagôgai*) and "binding spells" (*katadesmoi*)—and implicates "prophets" as possible performers, a crossover that is easy to explain, if

[52] Carastro (2006) 185–86.

Plato is thinking of prophets as people who can chant both oracles and incantations in dactylic hexameters. [53]

5.3 Conditional Boasts as Incantatory Formulae

I suggested earlier that the two different types of *pharmakon*—herbal and verbal—could have encouraged the *Odyssey* poet to adapt a traditional boast about an incantation and use it to describe Helen's exotic Egyptian drug, but we need to dig more deeply, because the anecdote preserved by Iamblichus points to something more specific, namely that the six verses which boast the power of Helen's *pharmakon* were *themselves* once used by Empedocles as an incantation to stop the homicidal rage of a young Sicilian man. I suggest, in short, that the *Odyssey* poet not only describes Helen's Egyptian *pharmakon*, *as if* it were an incantation, but that he also mimics the conditional boasts and other syntactical oddities that we find in early incantations composed in dactylic hexameters. There are, in fact, two features of Helen's boast, for which we have excellent parallels

[53] We find this same connection, in fact, between prophecy and incantation in another well-known autobiographical fragment of Empedocles, Frag. 102.7–12 Wright (= D-K 111 = Inwood 1): "Whenever I enter the prospering towns, I am revered by men and women. They follow me in countless numbers asking where their advantage lies, some yearning for prophecies and others inquiring to hear a ritual-utterance that is good for healing all kinds of diseases (ἐπὶ νούσων παντοίων . . . εὐηκέα βάξιν) because they have long been pierced <on both sides> by harsh <pains>." (The restorations in diamond brackets are those of Bergk, based on Homeric parallels, and have no effect on the argument put forth here.) Empedocles claims, in short, that to a large degree his fame lies in his mastery of two kinds of speech-acts: prophecies and the "utterance that is good for healing" (εὐηκέα βάξιν). Those who in the past imagined Empedocles as a traditional physician have suggested that the phrase refers to medical diagnoses and other advice that Empedocles gave to the sick wherever he traveled, for example, Kirk and Raven (1963) 321, who claim that Empedocles' "fame as a doctor is suggested by his own words" and they translate "while others . . . beg to hear the word that heals all manner of illness." See also van Groningen (1971) 183: "les autres désirent un conseil salutaire. . . ." The word βάξις, however, is quite rare in Greek and refers primarily to ritual speech, often in verse, such as oracles, prayers, or incantations (see LSJ s.v.). The phrase, in short, is best translated (as above) a "ritual utterance (βάξις) that is good for healing (εὐήκης)", and when combined with ἐπὶ νούσων may in fact be a poetic periphrasis for the most common Greek word for incantation (*ep-aoidê*), which is literally a "song sung over" a sick person or a diseased part. See Laín Entralgo (1970) 82, who long ago translated βάξις as a "curative word," and Lloyd (1979) 34: "Whether 'this word of healing' consisted of the sort of advice that we find in Hippocratic works . . . or whether it was simply a matter of spells or charms—ἐπῳδαί—is not clear from the text, but the fact that the term for 'word' is βάξις—used of the pronouncements of oracles in particular—suggests that the latter is more likely." Inwood (2001) 211 sees a twofold reference to prophecy here, which he translates "some in need of divinations and others in all sorts of diseases sought to hear a *healing oracle*"; Gregory (2013) 178 follows suit.

among the earliest extant incantations: (i) the use of a conditional relative clause to identify the victim or beneficiary of the incantation ("whosoever should drink this down . . ."), and (ii) the negative formulations used to describe the power of a protective incantation ("neither X nor Y shall harm . . .").

We begin with a text that is, in fact, one of our earliest metrical inscriptions. The so-called Nestor's Cup Inscription was inscribed in the late eighth century BCE on a simple terracotta cup that was then placed in a grave on the island of Pithecusae (modern Ischia), which lies off the shore of Naples:[54]

> Νέστορός ε[ἰμι] εὔποτον ποτήριον.
> ὃς δ' ἂν τοῦδε π[ίη]σι ποτηρί[ου], αὐτίκα κεῖνον
> ἵμερος αἱρήσει καλλιστε[φά]νου Ἀφροδίτης.
>
> I am the cup of Nestor, good for drinking.
> Whosoever drinks from this cup, desire for beautifully
> crowned Aphrodite (i.e., sex) will seize him instantly.

Although in the past, some have claimed that the curse expressed in the two hexametrical verses (lines 2–3) is some kind of joke or humorous allusion to the Nestor in the *Iliad*, its form—a conditional curse in dactylic hexameters—suggests that it is simply our earliest witness to the long history of hexametrical incantations in the Greek world.[55] To begin with, its content is similar to other proprietary curses found on objects in archaic times, for example, a curse in prose on another piece of pottery: "I am the jug of Tataie. Whoever steals me will go blind!" (Ταταίης εἰμὶ λέκυθος. ὃς δ' ἂν με κλέψει τυφλὸς ἔσται) or a common type of tombstone curse designed to keep looters away.[56] So, even if there *is* some humor or literary point in the inscription on the Pithacussae cup, its author, just as Hipponax or Aristophanes did in the parodies discussed earlier, must be playing off the idea that there existed in the late eighth-century BCE Greek world bona fide erotic curses in hexameters like these that were designed to force passion

[54] *SEG* 14 (1957) no. 604. The spelling has been regularized for easier comprehension.

[55] See West (1994) and Faraone (1996) for a full discussion of earlier scholarship. Pavese (1996) 20 also sees it as a serious inscription, which shows "epic diction" and which is contemporary with but independent of Homer. For more recent assessments, which see no conflict between the form of a bona fide curse and some kind of comic intent or quotation, see Lamboley (2001); von Möllendorff (2011) 428; and Gerhard (2011).

[56] For example, a tomb inscription from Rhodes (early sixth century BCE; spelling regularized): σῆμα τόδ'Ἰδαμενεὺς ποίησα ἵνα κλέος εἴη/ Ζεὺ(ς) δέ νιν ὅστις πημαίνοι λειόλη θείη ("This tomb I, Idameneus, made that I might have fame. Whoever harms (it), may Zeus make him utterly accursed!"). For many more parallels, see now Cingano (2018) 28–40.

instantly upon the person who drinks from a charmed cup.[57] Roman-period magical papyri, in fact, preserve two recipes for erotic conquest that are also called *potêria* (i.e., "drinking-cup spells") and that instruct us to speak a prose incantation over or into a drinking cup and then give it to the victim to drink.:[58] It is possible, therefore, that in archaic times orally performed charms of this type preceded the one inscribed on the cup from Pithecusae. And given the extremely early date of this inscription, we can indeed imagine that the *Odyssey* poet might have known a conditional curse of this sort designed to be spoken over a cup or mixing bowl. But, instead of having Helen chant the charm over the wine, the poet of the *Odyssey* took the traditional text of a verbal *pharmakon* and used it instead in his narrative to describe and praise the power of a mysterious herbal *pharmakon* that she allegedly procured from Egypt.

The simplicity of the Pithecusae incantation has, in fact, more to teach us: it consists, like the description of Helen's *pharmakon*, simply of a boast in the future tense ("*erôs* will seize") keyed to a conditional apodosis ("whosoever drinks"). There are no invocations of demons or gods, no imperatives, and no performative language. Only a declarative sentence whose main verb is in the future tense. The boast, in short, is the charm itself. We find similar syntax near the beginning of the Getty Hexameters:[59]

> ὅστις τῶν[δ]' ἱερῶν ἔπεων ἀρίσημα καλύψει
> γράμματα κασσιτέρωι κεκολαμμένα λᾶος ἐν οἴκωι,
> οὔ νιμ πημανέουσι ὅσα τρέφει εὐρεῖα χθών
> οὐδ' ὅσα πόντωι βόσκει ἀγάστονος Ἀμφιτρίτη{ς}
>
> Whosoever hides in a house of stone the letters of these holy words visibly inscribed in tin, they shall not harm him, however many things the broad earth rears or loud-groaning Amphitrite nourishes in the sea.

Here the very presence of "these holy verses" in the house guarantees its protection from harm, just as the inscription of the couplet on the Pithacussan cup ensured the efficacy of the erotic curse by a physical connection. One final parallel can be adduced: an erotic incantation from a fragment of a

[57] See, e.g., Lamboley (2001) and von Möllendorf (2011).

[58] "A Good *Potêrion*. Over a cup say seven times: 'I conjure you, holy names of Kypris, so that if you descend into the guts of So-and-so, whom So-and-so[bore], make her love me!' " (*PGM* IV 385–89) and "A Remarkable *Potêrion*: Say the spell that is spoken into the cup seven times: 'You are wine; you are not wine, but the head of Athena etc. . . . At whatever hour you descend into the guts of her, So-and-so, let her love me, So-and-so, [for] all the time of her life.' " (*PGM* VII 643–52); for discussion, see Faraone (1996) 104–5.

[59] For this text and translation, see Faraone and Obbink (2013) 10–11 and Faraone (2013c) for the different and sometimes conflicting references in this text to oral and written "performance."

papyrus formulary in Berlin that dates to the late first century BCE or early first century CE:[60]

> ἐπὶ μήλο[υ] ἐπωδή· τρίς·
> βα[λ]ῶ μή[λ]οις [c. 4] δώσω τόδε φάρμακ[ον] καίριον αἰεὶ
> βρωτὸν θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισι καὶ θεοῖσιν
> ᾧ ἄν δῶ μήλῳ τε βάλω μήλῳ τε πατάξω
> πάντα ὑπερθεμένη μαίνοιτ' ἐπ'ἐμῆι φιλότητι
> εἴτ' ἐν χειρὶ λαβο[ῦ]σα φάγοι . . .
> ἤ ἐν κόλπωι καθίσαι ⟨καὶ⟩ μὴ παύσαιτο φιλῶν με.
> ⟨πότνια⟩ Κυπρογένεια τέλει τελέαν ἐπαοιδήν.
>
> Incantation over an apple, three times:
> I shall strike with apples . . . I shall give this *pharmakon*, always in season,
> edible for mortal men and immortal gods.
> To whatever woman I give (it) or I hit and strike with the apple
> setting everything aside, may she be mad for my love,
> whether she seizes it in her hand and eats (it) . . .
> or sets it down in her bosom, may she not cease to love me.
> O <Lady> Cyprogeneia bring to perfection this perfect spell.

As do the other examples discussed above, this incantation boasts its power conditionally ("to whomsoever I give the apple . . . , at whomsoever I throw it") and it offers two options for its use: "whether she seizes it . . . or holds it in her bosom." In this later version, however, the confident future verb, which we find only in the earliest incantations, has been replaced by the weaker optative, which seems in turn to be dependent on the final request that Aphrodite bring the incantation to fruition.

More importantly, when we look at the chart below, we can see that, like some of the other charms discussed earlier, this "Apple Spell" connects a verbal incantation with a physical object that takes on the power of the incantation and thereby transfers it to the victim or patient:[61]

[60] *GEMF* 4.1–15 (*PGM* CXXII 1–15; *SM* 72), with the commentary in the *editio princeps* of Brashear (1979) 261–78. The first two lines have yet to be reconstructed in a satisfactory manner; for other possibilities, see Merkelbach apud Brashear loc. cit. 267; R. Janko (1988) 293; and L. Koenen apud Janko (1988) n. 1. The papyrus dates paleographically to the time of Augustus, but the corruption of the meter of the incantation and the use of the hemistich τέλει τελέαν ἐπαοιδὴν as a coda suggests that it was probably composed much earlier. These points are discussed below in Section 5.4.

[61] This tandem use of a verbal charm and object is well illustrated, in fact, in Plato's *Charmides* 155b–157c, where Socrates describes a Thracian headache remedy that consists of a leaf and an incantation (*epôdê*), which succeeds only if both are used together; see Faraone (2009) for detailed discussion.

Source	Object	Protasis + deictic pronoun	Effects
Helen's *Pharmakon*	Egyptian herb placed in the wine	"*whosoever* should drink *this* down"	no tears (= no anger/no sadness)
		(two alternatives) not even (i) if parents lie dead, or (ii) if someone killed his brother or son	
Hesiod's *Theogony*	(none)	"*if someone* is unhappy and grieving"	Forgets cares and sorrows (at once)
Nestor's Cup	the cup	"*whosoever* drinks . . . from *this* cup"	erotic desire (instantly)
Getty Hexameters	the lead tablet	"*whosoever* should hide *these* sacred words"	no evils "they shall not harm him,"
		(two alternatives) (i) however many the earth rears or (ii) the sea nourishes"	
Berlin Papyrus	the apple	"to *whichever* woman I give *this pharmakon* or hit with it"	erotic desire
		(two alternatives) "whether she (i) eats it or (ii) sets it in her bosom"	

The simplest forms of these incantatory boasts are those that the Hesiodic poet and the Nestor's Cup Inscription make, which focus on a single generic person and emphasize the quickness of the emotional or bodily effects: amnesia about cares and sorrows or erotic desire. The Getty Hexameters and the Berlin Apple Spell also focus on a single person, but then go on to describe two alternative scenarios, just as the *Odyssey* poet does when he describes the power of Helen's Egyptian *pharmakon*.

The description of Helen's *pharmakon* shares one other important feature with the earliest hexametrical incantations: a boast that is made in the negative and describes what will *not* happen (paraphrase): "whoever drinks it will *not* be sad, *not even* if his parents were dead *or* if someone killed his brother or son." For comparanda, we begin with a curious episode in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, in which the disguised Demeter

boasts that she knows how to protect a newborn baby from various dangers:[62]

> θρέψω, κοὔ μιν ἔολπα κακοφραδίῃσι τιθήνης
> οὔτ' ἄρ' ἐπηλυσίη δηλήσεται οὔθ' ὑποταμνόν·
> οἶδα γὰρ ἀντίτομον μέγα φέρτερον ὑλοτόμοιο,
> οἶδα δ' ἐπηλυσίης πολυπήμονος ἐσθλὸν ἐρυσμόν.
>
> I will nurse him, and I do not expect—through any weak-mindedness of his nurse—that witchcraft or an "undercutter" will harm him, for I know an antidote far stronger than a "woodcutter" and I know an excellent defense against woeful witchcraft.

Scholars have long suggested that in her boast Demeter seems to imitate a popular magical charm.[63] One clue is the fact that, like the seemingly technical terms used to label Helen's *pharmakon*, the words "undercutter" (ὑποταμνόν) and "woodcutter" (ὑλοτόμος) do not appear elsewhere in ancient Greek and seem to be the folk names of demons that cause teething pains in babies.[64] Here, too, some scholars have argued in the past that these are boasts about protective drugs, not metrical charms,[65] but more than a half century ago Paul Maas showed that the verse cited above in line 228 was strikingly similar in structure to a hexametrical verse on a Hellenistic lead amulet from Phalasarna, Crete.[66]

His important insight did not create much of a stir in 1944, but the more recently discovered amulets from West Greece contain similar boasts in the negative and suggest that they were another important feature of early hexametrical charms:[67]

> οὔτ' ἄρ' ἐπηλυσίη δηλήσεται οὔθ' ὑποταμνόν (*Hymn to Demeter*)
>
> ("neither witchcraft nor an 'undercutter' will harm him")

[62] *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 227–30.

[63] Richardson (1974) 229–31 and Scarpi (1976) 159–73.

[64] Allen (1895) in a brief note and then again in Allen, Halliday, and Sikes (1936) 155–56. See Faraone (2001c) for a detailed defense of Allen's thesis against Richardson (1974) and Johnston (1999a) 168, who see the "woodcutter" and "undercutter" as herbalists who might harm the child with baneful plants. The word ἐπηλυσίη is a term used elsewhere in hexameters for the "attack" or "assault" of a demon or spell, and it appears only one other time in early Greek poetry in a nearly identical construction in the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes*, where it refers to the apotropaic power of tortoise or its shell, when placed at an entranceway (37: ἐπηλυσίης πολυπήμονος ἔσσεαι ἔχμα). Significantly, the young Hermes finds the tortoise "at the gates of the courtyard" (line 26), a popular place in the Greek magical tradition to set up apotropaic herbs, inscriptions, and images; see Faraone (1992b) 3–9.

[65] Richardson (1974) 230.

[66] Maas (1944).

[67] Of the earlier work, much valuable information can still be got from Wünsch (1900) 73–85, but for the best text and translation, see Jordan (1992) whom I follow here; the uncorrected text of the Phalasarna tablet is ὅ με καταχρίστ[ωι δ]ηλήσετοι οὔτε ἐπηνίκτ[ωι]/ οὔτε πατῶι [οὔ]τ' ἐπατωγῆι.

οὔ με καταχρίστ[ωι δ]ηλήσεται οὔτ' ἐπενίκτ[ωι] (Phalasarna Tablet)
οὔτε πατῶι [οὔ]τ' ἐπατωγῆι

("shall harm me neither with ointment nor application, nor drink nor spell")

[οὐ]κ ἄν δ⟨η⟩λήσαιτ' οὐδεὶς {ουδαι} πολυφάρ[μακος (Selinus Tablet)
οὔ κα δαλήσαιτο οὔδ α[ἰ πολυφάρμακος (Locri Tablet)

("Nor would anyone do harm, not even one armed with powerful drugs")

The best-preserved version of this kind of boast, however, stands near the start of the Getty Hexameters, in the passage that was quoted earlier:

οὔ νιμ πημανέουσι ὅσα τρέφει εὐρεῖα χθών
οὐδ' ὅσα πόντωι βόσκει ἀγάστονος Ἀμφιτρίτη{ς}

("They shall not harm him, however many things the broad earth rears
nor however many things loud-groaning Amphitrite nourishes in the sea")

This version uses a different future verb of harming and highly poetic language, but, like the other examples discussed above, it is a boast about the power of the verses that somehow has the power to protect, in and of itself.

It seems, finally, that this traditional boast was still known in Hellenistic times, when Theocritus alludes to at the start of his *Idyll* 11, a poem addressed to his lovesick friend Nicias, a Coan doctor and fellow poet (1–6):[68]

οὐδὲν ποττὸν ἔρωτα πεφύκει φάρμακον ἄλλο,
Νικία, οὔτ' ἔγχριστον, ἐμὶν δοκεῖ, οὔτ' ἐπίπαστον,
ἢ ταὶ Πιερίδες· κοῦφον δέ τι τοῦτο καὶ ἁδύ
γίνετ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώποις, εὑρεῖν δ' οὐ ῥᾴδιόν ἐστι.
γινώσκειν δ' οἶμαί τυ καλῶς ἰατρὸν ἐόντα
καὶ ταῖς ἐννέα δὴ πεφιλημένον ἔξοχα Μοίσαις.

Against *erôs* there is no other *pharmakon*,
Nicias, neither ointment, it seems to me, nor salve,
except the Muses; light is this *pharmakon* and sweet
for mortals, but it is not easy to discover.
But I think that you know this well, since you are a physician
and loved in excess by the nine Muses.

These texts also carry versions of the *Ephesia grammata*, for which see Jordan (2000a); Bernabé (2013); and Janko (2013).

[68] I use the text of Gow (1952) and my own translations throughout; for a more detailed discussion of the argument presented here, see Faraone (2006c). These lines and the rest of the prologue have generated much interest among scholars of Hellenistic poetry because Theocritus uses them to frame at an ironic distance the "song" of the lovesick Cyclops that occupies the rest of the poem. See, e.g., Hopkinson (1988) 149–50 and Goldhill (1991).

Commentators disagree over the precise claims being made here,[69] but all agree that the poet equates the word *pharmakon* with "medicine."[70] I would agree, but I suggest that these verses are more complicated, because Theocritus is, in fact, playing on the double meaning of the word *pharmakon* and reversing the traditional boast that one finds in the protective charms discussed above, as we can see in emphatically reiterated denials in the first two lines (*Idyll* 11.2):[71] "Against *erôs* there is no other (οὐδὲν . . . ἄλλο) *pharmakon*, Nicias, neither ointment . . . nor salve (οὔτ᾽ ἔγχριστον . . . οὔτ᾽ ἐπίπαστον)." The incantations, of course, boast that hostile ointments and potions will *do no harm* to the person who chants the hexameters or holds an amulet inscribed with them, but Theocritus inverts this formula to say that beneficial ointments or applications will *do no good*, because in the case of lovesickness, only the verbal *pharmakon* of the Muses (i.e., hexametrical poetry) will provide the cure. This is another case, in short, in which Theocritus uses a well-known hexametrical genre to frame his poem, a genre with which Nicias and his other readers were surely familiar, as we shall see below.

It would appear, then, that in the classical period Greeks in various parts of the Mediterranean basin knew of magical incantations that were hexametrical, used conditional statements to boast about their efficacy, and often used multiple negative statements about what disease, demon, or attack would *not* harm the owner. In most of these cases, moreover, as we saw in the claim of the Getty Hexameters about the "house of stone," the simple boast in the future tense and in the proper hexametrical form was thought to be efficacious on its own. Indeed, as we have seen, in none of the lead amulets or in Demeter's boast or in the Nestor's Cup Inscription do we find any invocation of the gods or *similia-similibus* formulae: the boasts themselves are performative utterances that make their effect simply by using the correct formula fitted to the dactylic verse in the correct places. The wide variety, however, in the content and wording of incantations, combined with close similarities in syntactical form, metrical placement of words, and practical purpose,

[69] Some, for example, Erbse (1965) 232–36; Manuwald (1990); Deuse (1990); and Hunter (1999) 219, suggest that Theocritus presents both himself and Polyphemus as lovesick Sicilian poets, who compose songs simply as entertainment that will distract themselves from their present cares. Others have suggested that Theocritus is alluding more explicitly to current theories about the cathartic or healing power of music—for example, Meillier (1982) and Farr (1991) 481—or that the embedded song is treated both as a curative draught and as a love potion: Goldhill (1991) 254–55.

[70] See, e.g., Hunter (1999) 224: "For (i.e., the disease of) *erôs* there is no other medicine, Nicias, neither ointment . . . nor salve." This reading stems, in part, from the idea that Theocritus is responding to a famous dithyramb of the poet Philoxenus, who framed Polyphemus' song as a healing event.

[71] Faraone (2006c).

suggests the freedom and elasticity of oral composition, presumably by individual poet-healers, who move about the Greek world, much as Empedocles moved throughout Sicily, adapting the traditional incantation to whatever specific challenges and clients they might meet. This is not, of course, dissimilar to the oral composer of hexametrical epics or hymns, who adapts his narrative to the specific audience at hand, without changing the key points or overall shape of the traditional plot. Indeed, the stability of the metrical, syntactical, and rhetorical form of these protective incantations is remarkable, seeing how they were apparently known in many places in the Greek world and from the early archaic period down until at least the Hellenistic.

5.4 Theocritus *Idyll* 2 and Other Hexametrical Curses

We have seen throughout this study that, in addition to being absorbed or embedded into archaic epic narratives, shorter hexametrical genres were also closely imitated by Hellenistic poets in their mimetic poems.[72] So it will come as no surprise that the longest and best example of an incantatory speech-act framing a hexametrical poem can be found in the first half of Theocritus' *Idyll* 2, where a courtesan[73] named Simaetha describes an ongoing curse that she and her servant are performing and at the same time enacts it by reciting a series of short *similia-similibus* incantations, separated by a refrain that is also part of the performance: "O *iunx*, drag (ἔλκε) to my house that man of mine!" The poem mimics a genre of incantation that differs radically from the protective charms discussed in the previous section: an erotic curse that seems to have been popular at least from the classical period onward. The individual stanzas of Theocritus' mimetic incantation generally take the form of a *similia-similibus* formula that is aimed at attacking Simaetha's perfidious lover, Delphis, by analogous ritual actions, for example,[74]

> As this laurel ignites (ἄφθη) and afterwards we see no ash—so may the flesh of Delphis waste (ἀμάθυνοι) in flame! (24–6)

[72] A more detailed version of this Section has appeared as Faraone (2021).

[73] Griffiths (1981) 263–65, for example, sees Simaetha as a down-on-her-heels daughter of a citizen, and Hopkinson (1988) 155 is agnostic about her social status and unusual lack of male guardian. Dickie (2001) 100–101, however, has shown decisively—by drawing many parallels from Hellenistic and Roman literature—that she would have been easily recognizable to Theocritus' readers as a courtesan who lived in her own home with a single servant and who was financially dependent on arranging a series of long-term sexual relationships with men.

[74] Theocritus, *Id.* 2.18–62, following closely the text and translation of Gow (1952) loc. cit.

> As I myself melt (τάκω) this wax with the goddess' aid—so may Mindian Delphis be melted (τάκοῖθ') by *erôs*!. (28–29)
>
> As this bronze rhombus from Aphrodite is whirled (δινεῖθ'), so may that man be whirled (δινοῖτο) to my door! (30–31)

In the past, scholars have used much later evidence—especially the prose spells in the Greek magical papyri—to guide us in understanding what Simaetha does and says in *Idyll* 2, but in recent years, some have suggested that these later recipes are not good comparanda or that in the poem Simaetha unwittingly reveals herself to be an incapable or foolish sorcerer—in either case concluding that we can no longer assume that the incantation in the first half of *Idyll* 2 accurately reflects erotic curses contemporary with Theocritus' poem.[75]

There are, however, chronologically much closer comparanda from the classical and Hellenistic periods that show us clearly how Theocritus, in composing Simaetha's long incantation, was indeed imitating—albeit in an extended bravura performance—the hexametrical form, vocabulary, and refrains of two popular types of late-classical curses that were both probably composed in dactylic hexameters:

Binding Spell (*Katadesmos*): seeks to restrain victims and their body parts in competitive circumstances and which in erotic competition was used to bind the victims' desire for others.[76]

Attraction Spell (*Agôgê*): seeks to torture the victims with fire and other forms of discomfort, until they leave their homes and come to the practitioner for sex.[77]

As far as we can tell, the *katadesmos* was a native Greek invention that was originally performed orally, as we saw at the start of this chapter in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, where the chorus of Furies tell Orestes that he is about to hear a "binding song" that will bind his thoughts and thereby paralyze any legal defense that he is planning for his upcoming trial for matricide.[78]

[75] *Not a good source*: Graf (1997) 176–86; Lambert (2002) 74; and Hordern (2002) 164, who suggests that the magical papyri are not reliable comparanda, because they are "significantly later." *Foolish or poor sorcerer*: Lambert (2002) 80–81 ("would-be witch . . . who gets everything wrong" and "comic send-up of a bungled magical ritual").

[76] Faraone (1991a) 13–15.

[77] Faraone (1993) and (1999a) 41–68.

[78] Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 306–48 in the translation of Lloyd-Jones (1979) and with the discussion of Faraone (1985).

Theocritus, in fact, clearly invites us to draw a parallel between Simaetha's curse and this older tradition of *katadesmoi*, because she herself thrice uses the verb *katadein* ("to bind down"), which is typically found on these lead tablets:[79]

> . . . ὡς τὸν ἐμὸν βαρὺν εὖντα φίλον καταδήσομαι ἄνδρα (2.3)
> . . . in order that I bind down my dear man, although he mistreats me.
>
> νῦν δέ νιν ἐκ θυέων καταδήσομαι (2.10)
> Now I shall bind him down with burnings!
>
> νῦν μὰν τοῖς φίλτροις καταδήσομαι (2.159)
> Now I shall bind him down with *philtra*!

In addition to the use of telltale verb *katadein,* Theocritus also makes use of the "performative future" in the repeated verb καταδήσομαι, a feature of early Greek ritual, which we also find in hexametrical incantations, as we saw in the previous section in the Berlin Apple Spell, which uses the future verbs βαλῶ and δώσω, instead of the more typical performative present.[80] As it turns out, a handful of early binding curses are composed in dactylic hexameters and also use the performative future. The first and longest is a curse from a grave of Hellenistic date found near Athens:[81]

> δήσω ἐγὼ Σωσικλείαν κα[ὶ κ]τήματα καὶ μέγα κῦδος
> καὶ πρᾶξιν καὶ νοῦν. ἐχθρὰ δὲ φίλοισι γένοιτο.
> δήσω ἐγὼ κείνην ὑπὸ Τάρταρον ἀερόεντ[α
> δεσμοῖς ἀργαλέ{ι}οις . . .
> σύν θ'Ἑκάτ<η>ι χθονίαι καὶ Ἐρινύσιν ἠλιθιώναις.
>
> I myself shall bind Sosiklea, her property, her great reputation,
> her activity and her mind. May she be hateful to her friends!
> I myself shall bind her under murky Tartarus
> in painful bonds . . .
> with the Hekate Chthonia and the distracting Furies.[82]

[79] For the regular meaning of *katadesmos* ("binding spell") and *katadein* ("to bind with a spell") see Gow (1952) ad *Id*. 2.3.

[80] For the use of the performative future on curse tablets, in other magical spells and in ritual utterances more generally, see Faraone (1995), who quotes other examples. Simaetha's use of the middle is appropriate in a spell performed jointly by herself and her slave.

[81] *DTA* 108 and Faraone (1995) 4–6 for a full discussion. The meter of the first line is marred, as is often the case in, e.g., funerary epigrams and dedicatory inscriptions, by the unmetrical name of the victim Sosikleia, which cannot, of course, be omitted. The curse begins on the inner surface of the rolled-up tablet and the last three words spill over onto the outer surface. I give here the reconstruction of Kaibel (1878) no. 1136, who dates the text to the third or second century BCE, and rightly assumes that the last half of line 4 was accidentally left out by the scribe.

[82] The adjective ἠλιθιώναις is a hapax, which means something like "who makes (sc. another) foolish" or "who distracts." See LSJ s.v. and Wilamowitz, apud Kaibel (1878) no. 1136, who compares similar words used to describe to the binding song of the Erinyes quoted and discussed at the beginning of this section.

This curse twice deploys a performative utterance in the future tense ("I *shall* bind") at the start of the verse, emphatically suggesting that human speech alone will suffice. But it is clear from the final line that the success of this curse in some vague manner depends as well on the presence of both Hecate and the Furies.

More recently, a cache of five lead tablets were excavated from a late-classical grave in Attica, each of which contains a formula that uses a similar expression in the future, for example,[83]

> δήσω τόγ γ᾽ ἐμὸν ἐχθρὸν Δημήτριον καὶ Φαναγόραν
> ἐν αἵματι καὶ κονίαισιν σὺμ πᾶσιμ φθιμένοις.
>
> I shall bind my enemy Demetrius and Phanagora,
> in blood and in ashes with all the dead.

This Attic curse and the one used against Sosikleia both use the "performative future" (δήσω), in a manner similar to Simaetha, and both refer to some kind of superhuman help from either underworld gods ("with the Hekate Chthonia and the distracting Furies") or ghosts ("with all the dead").[84] Theocritus suggests a similar kind of divine partnership, as we saw earlier, when he has Simaetha say (28–29), "As I with the goddess's aid (σὺν δαίμονι) melt this wax, so may Delphis of Myndus melt with *erôs*!"[85] Simaetha, in fact, prefaces her entire incantation with a similar request for help from Hecate (*Idyll* 2.14–16):[86]

> χαῖρ᾽, Ἑκάτα δασπλῆτι, καὶ ἐς τέλος ἄμμιν ὀπάδει,
> φάρμακα ταῦτ᾽ ἔρδοισα χερείονα μήτε τι Κίρκας
> μήτε τι Μηδείας μήτε ξανθᾶς Περιμήδας.
>
> Hail grim Hecate and to perfection accompany us
> by making these *pharmaka* no less powerful than those of Circe,
> and of Medea and of blond Perimede.

These verses give us more insight into the partnership between Simaetha and Hecate: the courtesan performs or oversees the burning rituals and makes the performative utterances, while Hecate is invoked somewhat vaguely to ensure success of the entire operation.

[83] I give here the text of the only published example, for which see Lamont (2015), who will publish the others soon. The two halves of the second line are reversed on the tablet, but Lamont rightly inverts their order to correct the scansion, especially since the phrase ἐν αἵματι καὶ κονίαισιν appears at the end of the line in *Od*. 22.383.

[84] Faraone (1995) 6.

[85] I assume with Gow (1952) loc. cit. that "the goddess" in question is Hecate.

[86] Throughout I use the text and translation of Gow (1952), with some minor changes to the latter.

This appeal is strikingly different from a typical prayer, in which one would simply ask the god to accomplish everything. It is also the case that in asking Hecate "to accompany us to perfection" (14: ἐς τέλος ἄμμιν ὀπάδει), Theocritus again imitates a traditional hexametrical coda that asks Aphrodite to "bring to perfection a perfect incantation!" We saw it already in the final verse of the Berlin "Apple Spell" (⟨πότνια⟩ Κυπρογένεια τέλει τελέαν ἐπαοιδήν), but hexametrical incantations of this type must have circulated in Greece much earlier. Sappho, for instance, in her famous *Hymn to Aphrodite* asks the goddess "bring to perfection however many things my heart longs to perféct" (ὄσσα δέ μοι τέλεσσαι/ θῦμος ἰμέρρει, τέλεσον)[87] and Aristophanes uses a similar expression at the end of his parody of an erotic curse that survives as a fragment from his lost play *Amphiareus*:[88]

> ὀσφὺν δ' ἐξ ἄκρων διακίγκλισον ἠΰτε κίγκλου
> ἀνδρὸς πρεσβύτου· τελέει δ' ἀγαθὴν ἐπαοιδήν
>
> Jiggle from its foundations—the rear end of the old man
> just like a jiggle-bird and bring to perfection an excellent incantation.

Aristophanes, as he does in his parodies of oracles, must again switch to dactylic hexameters in order to compose these parodic verses that presumably stood at the very end of a much longer comic incantation designed to subdue an old man erotically.[89]

The broad similarities between Simaetha's curse, the Aristophanic fragment, the metrical binding spells of classical and Hellenistic date, and the Berlin "Apple Spell" can be summarized as follows:

Performative future ("I shall bind/I shall strike")
Fourth BCE Attic *katadesmos* (e.g., δήσω)
Third BCE Theocritus 2.10 (ἐκ θυέων καταδήσομαι)
First BCE/CE "Apple Spell" (βα[λ]ῶ μή[λ]οις [c. 4] δώσω)

[87] Frag. 1.26–27; see Faraone (1992a) 323–24.

[88] Frag. 29 K-A; for discussion of this fragment and the many hexametrical parallels from later Roman period magical texts, see Faraone (1992a) and the following note.

[89] In addition, there are about a half-dozen extant spells, most of them erotic curses of Roman date (some entirely in prose), that end with versions of this same hexametrical coda, suggesting in each case that, although the originally hexametrical form of the curse had been almost entirely lost, it somehow persisted in the coda as a traditional mark of closure. The second column of the Berlin papyrus, for example, includes two examples where the hexametrical coda is placed at the end of an erotic curse in prose. The first of them replaces Aphrodite with Isis (δέσ[ποι]να Ἶσι, τέλει τελέαν ἐπαοιδήν) and the second retains Aphrodite: πότνια Κυπρογενεία τέλει τελέαν ἐπαοιδήν (*PGM* CXXII ii 7–8 and 24–25). There is yet another recipe for an *agôgê* that ends κ]αλῶς μο[ι τέλει ταύτην

Presence, but not agency, of superhuman entities

Fourth BCE Attic *katadesmos*: δήσω . . . σὺμ πᾶσιμ φθιμένοις
Hellenistic Attic *katadesmos*: δήσω . . . σύν θ' Ἑκάτ<η>ι χθονίαι καὶ Ἐριννύσιν ἡλιθιώναις
Third BCE Theocritus 2.28: σὺν δαίμονι τάκω

Request to a deity for the "perfection" of erotic curses

Sixth BCE(?) Sappho Frag. 1.26–27: τέλεσον
Fifth BCE Aristophanic parody: τελέει δ' ἀγαθὴν ἐπαοιδήν
Third BCE Theocritus 2:14: Ἑκάτα . . . ἐς τέλος ἄμμιν ὀπάδει
First BCE/CE "Apple Spell" ends by asking Cyprogeneia: τέλει τελέαν ἐπαοιδήν

Taken together, these parallels suggest that Theocritus was well aware of this early Greek tradition of hexametrical curses, which begin with an emphatic performative future, but also refer, often at the very end, to the presence or help of gods or other superhuman entities.

As mentioned above, Simaetha's incantation also reflects a second kind of curse, the usually violent erotic curse or "spell of attraction" (*agôgê*), which tortures its victims with physical abuse or burning in order to force them to come to the practitioner of the spell.[90] We saw such torture earlier, of course, in the three *similia-similibus* actions aimed at Delphis that involved melting, burning, or some other kind of painful or disorienting attack.[91] In the parodic charm discussed above, Aristophanes is probably poking fun at a similar kind of curse ritual, when he bids some divinity to jiggle the old man's rear end, like a jiggle-bird, an action that also implies violence in addition or instead of restraint, perhaps even with the use of an actual bird as an effigy. We can, in fact, see a similar combination of ritual and speech-act in Pindar's brief and allusive report of the erotic curse that Jason successfully used against Medea:[92]

πότνια δ' ὀξυτάτων βελέων
ποικίλαν ἴυγγα τετράκναμον Οὐλυμπόθεν

τὴν ἐπα]οιδήν (*PGM* VII 991–92) and a recently published erotic curse of late-first-century CE date to inflict insomnia (*P.Oxy.* LXV 4468, col. ii 9–10): Κυπρο]γένεια τέλει τελέαν ἐπαοιδήν.

[90] Faraone (1999a) 44–95.
[91] See Faraone (2021).
[92] Pindar, *Pythian* 4.213–19 as translated by Race (1997).

ἐν ἀλύτῳ ζεύξαισα κύκλῳ
μαινάδ' ὄρνιν Κυπρογένεια φέρεν
πρῶτον ἀνθρώποισι λιτάς τ' ἐπαοιδὰς
ἐκδιδάσκησεν σοφὸν Αἰσονίδαν,
ὄφρα Μηδείας τοκέων ἀφέλοιτ' αἰ-
δῶ, ποθεινὰ δ' Ἑλλὰς αὐτάν
ἐν φρασὶ καιομέναν δονέοι μάστιγι Πειθοῦς. . . .

And the queen of sharpest arrows, Cyprogeneia,
brought down from Olympus the dappled *iunx*-bird
pinned to the four spokes of an inescapable wheel,
a mad bird, to mankind for the first time,
and she taught Jason to be skillful in supplicatory-incantations,
in order that he might strip Medea of reverence for her parents,
and that desire for Greece might shake her
with the whip of Persuasion as she was burning in her heart.

The device that Aphrodite gives Jason is a special kind of bird tied to a wheel, a description that some commentators think lies behind Simaetha's *iunx* as well,[93] and, indeed, this entire ritual, like the one performed in Simaetha's home, clearly has a goal similar to the erotic curses described earlier, namely to force the victim to abandon their loved ones—in Medea's case to strip her of her reverence for her parents—and come to the person performing the curse.[94] And here, as in the repeated analogies used throughout Simaetha's performance and as in the presumed treatment of the jiggle-bird in Aristophanes' parody, I suggest that what happens to the bird is to be projected upon Medea. In this respect, the final sentence in the passage—"that desire for Greece might shake her with the whip of Persuasion as she was burning in her heart"—evokes in somewhat abstract fashion three clear images of torture (shaking, whipping, and burning),[95] as does the presence of the wheel itself, which in the ancient Greek world was, in fact, a common frame for torture.[96]

The birds mentioned by Pindar and Aristophanes, moreover, reflect a form of ancient effigy magic, in which the target of a curse is assimilated to a bound or transfixed bird, over which a *similia-similibus* formula

[93] Gow (1934).
[94] For a full discussion see Faraone (1999a) 56–58.
[95] Faraone (1999a) 41–68 passim.
[96] Vergote (1972) and Thür (1977). The most common expression in Greek is "to be racked (*streblousthai*) upon the wheel" (Herodotus 2.89; Demosthenes 29.40; Plutarch *Nicias* 30; Aristophanes *Wealth* 875 and *Frogs* 620; and Antiphon 5.32). The basic meaning of *streblousthai* is "to be twisted" or "to be strained tight" as in the case of cables in a windlass (Hdt. 7.36) or strings on a musical instrument (Plato *Republic* 531b). The focus seems to be on the stretching or the tension of the victim's body; e.g., see the simile in Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 845–46: "Such is the strain and the stretching that hold me—as if I were being racked (*streblousthai*) upon the wheel."

was intoned—for example, a formula inscribed on a lead curse tablet from Roman Carthage: "Just as this rooster has been bound down in its feet, hands and head, so, too, bind down the legs, hands, head and heart of Victoricus the charioteer."[97] There is, of course, a wide chronological gulf between Pindar or even Aristophanes and a Roman-period curse tablet, but this gap has, in fact, been filled in by the recent discovery near the Athenian Agora of a strange ensemble buried in the floor of a Hellenistic workshop, in which a small chicken was apparently used as an effigy in an elaborate binding curse.[98] More importantly for this study, however, is the fact that when Pindar uses the phrase "supplicatory incantations" (λιτάς τ' ἐπαοιδάς) to describe the speech-acts that Aphrodite taught Jason, the word "incantation" (*epaoidê*) most probably refers to another performance in dactylic hexameters, because in the magical handbooks and elsewhere, whenever a metrical text is referred to as an *epaoidê*, that text is always in dactylic hexameters.[99] And indeed this is corroborated by the series of hexametrical texts discussed above, which, beginning with Aristophanes' parody, ask a god, usually Aphrodite, to bring to perfection a "perfect" or "excellent" incantation (*epaoidê*). Pindar, in short, suggests that Jason successfully seduced Medea by binding and torturing a bird and by performing an incantation that supplicates some divinity (presumably Aphrodite) and that was probably composed in dactylic hexameters.

[97] *DT* 241.15–20 (Carthage, second century CE). See also *DT* 222B1–5 (Carthage, first century CE): "[Just] as I have ripped out the tongue of this rooster . . . and pierced it, so too may they (i.e., the ghosts of the people buried in the tomb) silence the tongues of my enemies!" and (a curse involving puppies) *DT* 111–12 (Aquitania, first century CE): "Just as this puppy is prone and unable to rise up, so, too, may they be unable to rise. May they be transfixed, just as the puppy has been transfixed" and, for detailed discussion, Faraone (1991a) 21–22 and (2019c).

[98] The device consists of a small terracotta cooking pot, which contained the skull and leg bones of a very young chicken. An iron disk covered the mouth of the pot and had attached to its underside a large iron spike that had been driven down into the ground through the bottom of the pot, which had previously been inscribed with more than thirty names. Marcie Handler kindly made me aware of this interesting find and I thank her for the description I have used here; at the 2009 APA Meetings in Philadelphia she gave a preliminary report entitled, "Chicken Soup for the Soul: New Evidence for the Practice of Magic in Hellenistic Athens." For details and full text see Lamont (2021).

[99] The epic form *epaoidê* is used, for example, even in the prose rubrics of a late-Hellenistic anthology of hexametrical incantations; see Appendix D below. The idea that in this passage Pindar is thinking about a specifically *hexametrical* charm might, in fact, be expected in a heavily dactylic poem like *Pythian* 4; see, e.g., Gildersleeve (1897) 281: "this poem, among all the Pindaric odes, approaches *epos* most closely, so the rhythmical composition reminds one of a hexametrical hymn. Four times in succession we have precisely the same pentapody, the close of which reminds us of the hexameter." And a century later O'Higgins (1997) 111–15 writes: a "pastiche of prophecy, narrative and commentary" that Pindar himself characterizes as "lines of epic verse" (57: ἐπέων στίχες)."

5.5 Summary

We have seen, then, how the narrator's boastful description of Helen's *pharmakon* in the *Odyssey* closely resembles bona fide incantations in two important ways: (i) it is cast as a conditional statement, like the Nestor's Cup Inscription or the Berlin "Apple Spell"; and (ii) it expresses its protective power in the usual negative and doubled manner (paraphrase): "not even if his mother and father died . . . or if someone should slay . . . his brother." Crucially important for this argument was the additional fact that Helen's herbal *pharmakon* is an outlier in the ancient Greek understanding of the two different forms and effects of *pharmaka*, as discussed by Plato: botanical or herbal *pharmaka* used to cure the human body from physical diseases, and verbal *pharmaka* used to cure the human mind or soul from negative emotions like grief or anger. In the end, then, we saw how this double meaning of the word *pharmakon* allowed the poet of the *Odyssey* room for some creative play, when he uses a traditional boast about the power of hexametrical poetry—especially incantations—to describe Helen's herbal *pharmakon*. But another important motivation for this adaptation must have been the poet's insistence on presenting the palace of Helen and Menelaus as an exceedingly ostentatious and "Egyptian" place, in which the partly divine Helen usurps the patriarchal role of her husband and does so by using exotic plants from Egypt.

Finally, as was the case with hymns and oracles, this chapter has allowed us to survey more widely and to track chronologically the genre of hexametrical incantations. We saw, for instance, how hexametrical charms fall into three basic categories: (i) some, like Demeter's boast or the lead amulets from Crete and Magna Graecia, focus on protection and seemed to operate without any divine assistance at all; (ii) others, like the metrical binding spells from Attica or the Furies' *hymnos desmios*, were designed to bind rivals or enemies; and (iii) still others, like the bound *iunx* of Jason, the parodic jiggle-bird charm of Aristophanes, or the incantation of Simaetha, were designed to attack and subdue an erotic target.[100] The literary versions or descriptions are, as we saw, each tendentious in its own way, but they do give us a good sense of the types of ritual actions that accompanied these chanted hexameters. Aeschylus suggests that in their "binding song" the Furies stamped the ground as they

[100] There are also hexametrical curses that depend entirely on chthonic deities to bind or harm the victim; see Appendix A below.

danced, just as the Spartan girls do in Theocritus' *epithalamion* for Helen, while Theocritus has Simaetha enact a more complicated series of persuasively analogical actions—whirling, burning, and melting—as she recites her long hexametrical charm. This is surely a bravura performance that brings together a number of *similia-similibus* actions, but it is framed, as we saw, as a hexametrical binding spell "with burnings". The erotic curses described by Pindar and parodied by Aristophanes, on the other hand, deploy *similia-similibus* actions of different types, presumably using two species of birds as effigies: the *iunx*-bird bound to a wheel and the *kigklos*-bird profoundly "shaken" in some undisclosed fashion. Finally, the deictic references to concrete objects in some of these incantations, for example, "this cup" in the Nestor's Cup Inscription or "this apple" in the Berlin recipe, suggest other kinds of ritual gestures by which these objects could become "enchanted" and thereby provide yet another possible inspiration for the *Odyssey* poet to creatively transform a hexametrical incantation sung over the wine into an equally boastful description of a handful of Egyptian herbs sprinkled upon it.

Finally, we should note the features that these different hexametrical charms share. We have seen, for instance, how the conditional boast was a crucial speech-act—and in some cases the only speech-act—deployed in an incantation, for example, the Nestor's Cup Inscription ("whosoever drinks . . . from this cup") or the Getty Hexameters ("whosoever should hide these sacred words"). We also saw how in the case of the protective charms, their intended effect was often described in the negative, detailing what pain, danger, or grief would be avoided by using the incantation. Another feature was the use of the performative future in first-person statements ("I shall bind Sosikleia," "I shall strike with apples," or, in *Idyll* 2, "I shall bind him down with burnings") and evidence from Sappho onward of curses, mainly in hexameters, ending with an appeal to Aphrodite or Persephone to bring an incantation to perfection. Lastly, these hexametrical charms, when compared with the hymns and instructional oracles, seem to be much shorter—indeed, the earliest example, the Nestor's Cup Inscription, is a mere two verses. The others are a bit longer. The two hexametrical incantations fully preserved in the Getty Hexameters, for example, consist of thirteen and nine verses each and the Berlin spell runs to seven lines in total. The two longest examples of the hexametrical binding spells inscribed on lead both date to the Hellenistic period and are equally brief: the Attic curse against Sosiklea was five verses in length and another from Cyrene against a woman named Pheronika (discussed below in Appendix B) has six. The data from all of

these bona fide examples on lead and papyrus generally coincides with the literary evidence, for example, the two Samian curses of "Homer" quoted in the Ps.-Herodotean *Life*: the four-verse curse against the annoyed priestess of the Kourotrophos and the conditional eight-verse curse against the potters. The literary examples with refrains are longer. In Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, the Furies perform their *hymnos desmios* in twenty-four choral verses (321–45), but these include a twice-repeated refrain of six verses, while Simaetha's incantation proper (*Idyll* 2.10–63) is a real outlier running to fifty-three hexametrical verses, which include the tenfold repetition of the single-verse refrain, although in this case, as was suggested above, Theocritus seems to have composed a tour de force that exaggerated the length of the incantation by vastly increasing the number and variety of different ritual actions. On the other hand, we should probably keep in mind the possibility that bona fide charms were repeated. The Berlin papyrus, in fact, tells us to repeat the "Apple Spell" three times, which means that the entire performance would have come to twenty-one verses.

6

Like Golden Aphrodite: Female Lament in the *Iliad*

The poet of the *Iliad* introduces his first formal lament with a metaphor, whose import has gone unnoticed (19.282–86):

> Βρισηΐς δ' ἄρ' ἔπειτ' ἰκέλη χρυσέῃ Ἀφροδίτῃ
> ὡς ἴδε Πάτροκλον δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
> ἀμφ' αὐτῷ χυμένη λίγ' ἐκώκυε, χερσὶ δ' ἄμυσσε
> στήθεά τ' ἠδ' ἀπαλὴν δειρὴν ἰδὲ καλὰ πρόσωπα.
> εἶπε δ' ἄρα κλαίουσα γυνὴ ἐϊκυῖα θεῇσι·
>
> At this point Briseis, just like golden Aphrodite,
> when she caught sight of Patroclus mangled by sharp bronze,
> poured herself over him and wailed sharply and with her hands scratched
> her breasts and delicate neck and beautiful face.
> And she spoke, wailing, a mortal woman in the likeness of goddesses.

Briseis displays broadly, of course, some of the traditional signs of grief that are elsewhere described in Greek literature and modern ethnography and are also depicted in Attic vase painting: a woman in direct contact with a dead body, wailing and in some cases beating her breasts or tearing her hair.[1] But in contrast to the many Homeric women whom we shall see lamenting in this chapter, Briseis is the only one who also disfigures the prize areas of female beauty: her breasts, her neck, and her face.[2] Some modern readers suggest that she acts this way because she alone is a slave and this is a mark of servility.[3] Such an approach, however, cannot explain the other striking anomaly in this passage: the simile in the first line that likens Briseis to Aphrodite, an analogy that does not, of course, suggest slavery at all—indeed, these types of metaphors are usually deployed to comment on the extraordinary beauty,

[1] *Tragedy*: women only occasionally scratch their cheeks, e.g., Aeschylus *Libation Bearers* 22–31; Euripides *Hecuba* 650–56 and *Suppliants* 71–77. *Ethnography*: e.g., Seremetakis (1991) 75 ("in [i.e., modern Greek] lament women beat their chests in anger, scratch their faces, scream"). *Vase paintings*: women tear their hair and hit their heads, but do not scratch their cheeks; see, e.g., Boardman (1955); Shapiro (1991); Dillon (2002) 274–88; and Swift (2010) 305–6 (women touch the body and are vividly emotional; men more distant and unemotional).

[2] In *Iliad* 24.710–12, Hecuba and Andromache, for example, tear their hair, and the Nereids beat their breasts (18.50–51), but they do not scratch or otherwise disfigure their skin.

[3] Pucci (1998) 98 and Tsagalis (2004) 60 and (2008) 244.

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intelligence, or regal bearing of aristocratic women. In this passage, moreover, the assimilation to Aphrodite is not a general one, but rather it is tightly bounded by the temporal adverbs ἔπειτ' in 282 ("at this point") and ὡς ἴδε in 283 ("when she saw . . ."") and is thus more focused than scholars have realized.[4] The metaphor suggests, in short, that Briseis becomes like Aphrodite only when she sees the body of a cherished young man and begins to wail.[5] And as it turns out, the only other place in the Homeric poems where a woman is assimilated to Aphrodite alone is in *Iliad* 24, where (as we shall see) Cassandra also begins to wail "like golden Aphrodite," precisely when she sees the corpse of her brother Hector for the first time.[6]

Gods and goddesses are, of course, generally without grief in Greek myth, with a few prominent exceptions. Thetis, as we shall see below in Section 6.1, mourns proleptically for Achilles in *Iliad* 18 and Demeter mourns when her daughter Persephone is kidnapped by Hades, but neither goddess disfigures herself. Aphrodite, on the other hand, deeply and uncontrollably laments her young lover Adonis, after he is killed by a boar, and she is vividly depicted disfiguring her body, for example, in Bion's *Epitaph for Adonis*, a hexametrical poem of the mimetic sort that dates to the late Hellenistic period (lines 23–27):[7] "Shrilly wailing, through long winding dells she wanders . . . her chest made scarlet by her hands; the breasts below, snowy before, grew crimson for Adonis." Vivid, as well, is the description of what happens when she finally sees the body (lines 39–40):

> ὡς ἴδεν, ὡς ἐνόησεν Ἀδώνιδος ἄσχετον ἕλκος,
> ὡς ἴδε φοίνιον αἷμα μαραινομένῳ περὶ μηρῷ,
> πάχεας ἀμπετάσασα κινύρετο. . . .
>
> When she saw, when she spied Adonis' unstaunchable wound,
> when she saw the gory blood upon his languishing thigh,
> spreading wide her arms she keened. . . .

[4] This simile is generally overlooked or interpreted in a general way, for example, Dué (2002) 74, who suggests that the metaphor refers to Briseis' role as a wife.

[5] For Homeric women the sight of the corpse triggers the lament, often (as here) with the verb *kôkuein*; see Derderian (2001) 28 n. 28 for parallels. Among the inhabitants of the Mani, "screaming occurs at the initial visual encounter with the corpse"; see Seremetakis (1991) 107.

[6] This metaphor is also attested once in Hesiod in a fragment of the *Catalogue of Women* (Frag. 30.25), where Tyro, the name of a Cyprian princess, has been restored to the initial verse position, but where there is no indication of lament. See below for the mention—at the very moment she learns of Hector's death—of a bridal veil given to Andromache on her wedding day by "golden Aphrodite." In the *Odyssey*, in the context of her impending marriage, Hermione, Helen's daughter, is also said to "have the beauty of golden Aphrodite" (4.14).

[7] This and all other translations of Bion's poem are by Reed (1997).

Here, the quick repetition of the triple temporal clauses in the first two verses (ὡς ἴδεν, ὡς ἐνόησεν . . . ὡς ἴδε) emphasizes, even more than the description of Briseis, the dramatic sequence by which she sees the body and then begins to shriek. These parallels, of course, raise the thorny question that we have dealt with before: does the Hellenistic poet Bion simply imitate the *Iliad* passage above, or do both independently reflect the ritual lament performed each year at the festival for Adonis?[8] We shall see below in Section 6.3 that Aphrodite's grief was, in fact, imitated annually by small groups of Greek women, who on Lesbos, in Athens, and elsewhere wildly lamented the dead youth in imitation of Aphrodite. But for now, it suffices to stress that when the poet of the *Iliad* says that Briseis mourns and mutilates herself "like golden Aphrodite," she is doing what many Greek women in the late-archaic period did, when on an annual basis they imitated the savage grief of the goddess or when they mourned their own dead.

This assimilation of Briseis to Aphrodite suggests, then, an unexplored model for those female laments that are a repeated and important feature of the second half of the *Iliad*, especially the three moving performances of the Trojan women at the very end of the poem that famously shift our attention away from the victorious Achilles to the dead Hector.[9] Here, as we saw on several occasions in this study, commentators argue or assume that the laments in the *Iliad* represent some kind of improvised or amateur speech-act that was performed by the female members of the family or their inner circle.[10] The actual form of this speech-act is never actually spelled out, but given the implicit contrast in *Iliad* 24 between the female laments and the sung dirges (*thrênoi*) of the professional male mourners, it seems that they were chanted or spoken.[11] Female lament in modern Greece provides a more complicated model, because the solo parts were often improvised in stichic verses of eight or fifteen syllables,[12] using a standard template into which

[8] Alexiou (2002) 135–36, for example, uses Bion's *Epitaph for Adonis*, along with Aeschylus' *Persians*, as independent evidence for the Greek tradition of lament.

[9] See, e.g., Easterling (1991); Murnaghan (1999); Pantelia (2002); and Perkell (2008).

[10] The bibliography is immense, for which see Tsagalis (2004) 195–218.

[11] The two key passages (discussed below) are the juxtaposition of *thrênos* and *goös* of chap. 5, p. 23, and this chapter at the start of Hector's funeral (*Iliad* 24.721–22) and the description of Achilles' funeral (*Od.* 24.68–72), at which his mother and her sisters perform the *goös*, but the Muses the *thrênos*. This male tradition of lyrical compositions is continued by Pindar and Simonides in the late-archaic period and then in the choral songs of Attic tragedy; see, e.g., Harvey (1955) 168–69; Holst-Warhaft (1992) 105–117; Murnaghan (1999) 205–6; Derderian (2001) 31; and Swift (2010) 299–303.

[12] See, e.g., Auerbach (1987) 27 ("one standard lament melody for their fifteen syllable unrhymed verses"); Letsios (2005) 294–5, who describes the fifteen-syllable verse as "the commonmost meter employed in laments"; or Caraveli (1980) 130–31, who calls Cretan lament "folk poetry" in rhyming

"the proper names, kin terms, and descriptive terms are inserted in the appropriate places."[13] In antiquity, of course, the most likely stichic verse for this job would have been the dactylic hexameter. And, as we will also see in the *Iliad*, in these modern laments, a single woman often emerges from the group to improvise a solo lament, at the end of which the remaining women give a unison response that include refrains, stylized sobbing, or shouts.[14] But despite this abundant evidence for later lament chanted or sung in stichic verses, scholars are usually content to treat female lament in the *Iliad* as a generic speech-act, one of Bakhtin's "primary genres," that is presumably drawn from ordinary prose but retains its significant features, such as the repetitions and refrains.[15]

Such an approach, moreover, dictates how modern scholars interpret later Greek laments in hexameters. When Erinna, for example, in the fourth century BCE chooses to compose her famous lament in hexameters and, a century later, when Bion does the same with his *Epitaph for Adonis*, scholars assume that in their choice of meter Erinna and Bion are both imitating the laments in the *Iliad*,[16] or—to put it another way—that dirges in dactylic hexameters were never performed outside of the fictive world of poetry. Here we see once again the "hegemonic" power that the Homeric poems were thought to hold over later generations of poets. In this chapter I shall argue to the contrary that the embedded laments in the *Iliad* provide us with the earliest evidence for a short genre of hexametrical lament chanted in solo performance by women at the funerals of relatives and probably also in the cult of Adonis.[17]

fifteen-syllable couplets. The Mani use an eight-syllable iambic verse to similar effect; see Seremetakis (1990) 482 and Holst-Warhaft (1992) 53.

[13] For example, the formulaic phrase "an old man, a kind father" may replace "a youth, a handsome man"; see Danforth (1982) 72–73 and Auerbach (1987) 35–36, who notes how lamenters insert their names and those of the dead into a standard format. Caraveli (1986) 185–86 discussing laments in the region of Zagori also speaks of stock patterns of composition and stock units to which performers can add the name of the dead and the various details about them.

[14] Danforth (1982) 73 and Seremetakis (1991) 99–100 and 106–7.

[15] See, e.g., Murnaghan (1999) 203 and Derderian (2001) 10, who speak of "Homeric speech genres," or Dué (2002) 77–78; Tsagalis (2004) 5 ("delivered in speech, not sung"); and Perkell (2008) 94–95, who speaks of "tradition(s)."

[16] Emphasized by Skinner (1982) 265, who traces the idea back to Bowra (1936) 341.

[17] For a full list and detailed discussion, see Tsagalis (2004) 166–67, who identifies twelve *goöi*, ten of which are performed in the last six books of the *Iliad*, two each in Books 18 and 19 and three each in Books 22 and 24. Of these twelve, I shall deal only with the nine from the end of the poem, leaving aside Agamemnon's proleptic lament for his brother (4.155–82), for which see now Sammons (2009), and Andromache's famous speech to Hector (6.407–39) begging him to stay within the wall, because both, as Tsagalis notes, are obvious outliers. I shall also leave out Achilles' speech in Book 18, which is indeed mournful, but has almost none of the conventions of a formal lament and seems entirely concerned with vows.

We shall also see how three of the shorter Iliadic laments—those of Briseis, Hecuba, and Helen—share specific vocabulary and syntax, both keyed to the hexametrical verse, that provide a standard beginning and conclusion to these solos. These generic markers will allow us, moreover, to approximate the basic length and form of these archaic laments and help us to locate places where the *Iliad* poet plays with his audience's generic expectations of the hexametrical dirge in order to create a variety of dramatic effects, for example, when Andromache at the public funeral of her husband angrily twists the customary superlative address to the corpse into a complaint about how Hector has given her superlative suffering, or when Achilles co-opts female lament in ways that show the depth of his sadness, but also the limits of his understanding of the genre. The approach taken in this chapter differs from previous studies in two important ways: (i) earlier studies focused primarily on whether the narrator introduced or framed the speech as a lament (*goös*), whereas I focus more closely on the syntax of the speech itself; and (ii) earlier studies suggested that these laments were a form of encomium that has a tripartite structure similar to that of other praise genres like hymns, whereas I shall argue that the traditional hexametrical lament primarily focused on establishing the close relationship between the female mourner and the deceased and then, using such intimacy to justify her deep sorrow and desire to lament. These laments, I shall suggest, perform the sadness or anger of the women, but only very rarely mention any outright praise for the fallen.[18]

The chapter is divided into four sections. In Sections 6.1 and 6.2, I offer close readings of the most "ritual" of the Homeric laments:[19] those that occur in the Myrmidon camp over Patroclus in *Iliad* 19 and those that the Trojan women perform over Hector in *Iliad* 24. I do so in order to lay out what I see as the standard features of this hexametrical genre. In Section 6.3, we turn to the ritual laments for Adonis performed on Lesbos and in Athens and imitated in two poems of Hellenistic date: Theocritus' *Idyll* 15 and Bion's *Epitaph for Adonis*, the latter of which—as we saw above—simultaneously describes and performs the traditional lament for Adonis, in which Aphrodite plays the central role lamenting the loss of her young lover. In Section 6.4, we turn to the later tradition of personal laments, especially the Linus song and the

[18] Menander Rhetor 434.10–437.4, for example, defines the Homeric lament as a "monody" ("solo song") that is a mixture of praise and lament, but one that always gives greater weight to lament; see Manakidou (1996) 36–37.

[19] Tsagalis (2004) 112.

long, but fragmentary, papyrus fragment of Erinna's *Distaff*, in which the poet mourns her girlfriend Baucis and, in the process, transforms the expected series of solo dirges into a single and lengthy lament in which all of the solos are performed by herself.

6.1 Myrmidon Laments for Patroclus

Although the news of Patroclus' death arrives in the Myrmidon camp in *Iliad* 18, it is not until Book 19 that we get a pair of formal laments over the corpse itself.[20] They start, as we saw earlier, when Briseis, after wailing sharply "like golden Aphrodite," begins her dirge (19.287–94):

> Πάτροκλέ μοι δειλῇ πλεῖστον κεχαρισμένε θυμῷ,
> ζωὸν μέν σε ἔλειπον ἐγὼ κλισίηθεν ἰοῦσα,
> νῦν δέ σε τεθνηῶτα κιχάνομαι ὄρχαμε λαῶν
> ἄψ ἀνιοῦσ'· ὥς μοι δέχεται κακὸν ἐκ κακοῦ αἰεί.
> ἄνδρα μὲν ᾧ ἔδοσάν με πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
> εἶδον πρὸ πτόλιος δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
> τρεῖς τε κασιγνήτους, τούς μοι μία γείνατο μήτηρ,
> κηδείους, οἳ πάντες ὀλέθριον ἦμαρ ἐπέσπον.
>
> O Patroclus, to wretched me by far the most beloved in my heart,
> I left you living when I went out of the tent,
> but now I find you dead, O leader of the people,
> upon my return. Thus for me one evil follows another continually.
> The husband, to whom my father and reverend mother gave me,
> I saw before my city mangled by sharp bronze,
> and my three brothers, whom my mother alone bore,
> beloved to me, all met their day of destruction.

In her dirge, Briseis addresses Patroclus in the vocative and identifies him superlatively as "by far the most beloved"[21] to her own wretched self (μοι δειλῇ). She then proceeds to explain her wretchedness, by treating the dead

[20] See the important studies of Pucci (1993) and Dué (2002). Perkell (2008) 95–97 suggests that only the dirges of the Trojan women in *Iliad* 24 are set in a shared public funeral and thus only they can rightly be called "ritual" or "formal." This view overstates the case. Although it is true that in *Iliad* 24 the women perform their laments in an elaborately staged royal event, I shall argue below that both the Myrmidon and Trojan laments seem to follow the same pattern: an informal, emotional response at the sight of the corpse, followed by a more intimate lament touching the body and supported by a group of women of similar age or social class. The only difference, I shall argue, is between the relative size of the communities, for Hector the womenfolk of an entire city, but for Patroclus only the slave women in the Myrmidon camp.

[21] In what follows, we shall see that this is a repeated internal marker for the beginning of a generic lament in hexameters. As far as I know, only Perkell (2008) 98 and 102–3 has stressed the significance of this feature, which she calls a "superlative expression of affection."

body before her as the last in a series of wartime corpses, which include those of her husband and her three brothers. The sight of yet another dead youth triggers, in short, painful memories of how in the past she saw and lamented other male bodies that were also dear to her.[22] In her lament the poet also reverses the trope of the mourned man leaving his house alive, but returning to it dead: it is Briseis, in fact, who left Patroclus alive in his tent, when the heralds of Agamemnon took her away, and it is she, in turn, who finds him dead when she returns.

Briseis closes her lament by recalling the past kindness of Patroclus (19.295–300):

> οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδέ μ' ἔασκες, ὅτ' ἄνδρ' ἐμὸν ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεὺς
> ἔκτεινεν, πέρσεν δὲ πόλιν θείοιο Μύνητος,
> κλαίειν, ἀλλά μ' ἔφασκες Ἀχιλλῆος θείοιο
> κουριδίην ἄλοχον θήσειν, ἄξειν τ' ἐνὶ νηυσὶν
> ἐς Φθίην, δαίσειν δὲ γάμον μετὰ Μυρμιδόνεσσι.
> τῶ σ' ἄμοτον κλαίω τεθνηότα μείλιχον αἰεί.
>
> But you did not allow me, after swift Achilles killed
> my husband and pillaged the city of divine Mynes,
> to weep, but you kept claiming that of divine Achilles
> you would set me as a wife and that you would lead me in ships
> to Phthia and feast my wedding among the Myrmidons.
> Therefore, I unceasingly mourn you dead, but always honey sweet.

Here, Briseis thanks the dead Patroclus for lifting her from the initial despair over the loss of her family, in part to illustrate, as would be appropriate, why she called him "most beloved" in her heart, but also, one might suspect, to make public Patroclus' perhaps private promises of an arranged marriage to Achilles and thereby gain some sympathy for herself before the internal audience of the Myrmidons.[23] And as we shall see more clearly below in Section 6.4, the three verses describing the promised bridal procession and nuptial feast illustrate, albeit obliquely, a common Greek tendency to conflate the genres of lament and (unfulfilled) wedding song.[24] Her lament runs to fourteen verses and at its end we find a single verse, which serves

[22] This response is common in modern Greek lament: see, e.g., Danforth (1982) 73 ("through their singing express their own grief for their own dead"); Caraveli (1986) 173 ("each woman's recollection of her own grief serves to remind and intensify the grief of others"); and Derderian (2001) 31.

[23] There is no evidence that others in Achilles' camp heard these promises and thus Briseis may be taking the occasion of the death of her patron to make public his promises. Seremetakis (1990) 502–7 suggests that lament in the Mani was a means of socially manipulating the men and political resistance, while Foley (1993) and Murnaghan (1999) show that sometimes in Greek epic and tragedy female characters use lamentation to express political resistance to male powers that be.

[24] The classic discussion of this conflation in modern Greece is Danforth (1982) 72–82 and passim. For a detailed discussion of Briseis as the "wife" of Achilles, see Dué (2002) 67–81.

as a "summarizing expression introduced by the inferential particle τῶ," a word that almost entirely disappears from post-Homeric literature,[25] but that does appear more than once in Erinna's hexametrical lament for Baucis. The summation draws an important inference from the preceding claims (paraphrase): "You were very kind to me when you lived; *therefore* I mourn you without cessation. . . ." This claim for a kind of "emotional reciprocity" with the dead person is also exhibited in modern Greek laments and it is, as we shall see, a crucial part of the ancient hexametrical lament.[26]

After Briseis completes her dirge, the poet describes the response of the other slave women in the camp (301–2):

> ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσ', ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες
> Πάτροκλον πρόφασιν, σφῶν δ' αὐτῶν κήδε' ἑκάστη.
>
> Thus she spoke as she lamented[27] and the women groaned in response
> with Patroclus as their excuse, each for the woes of their very own.

Here, we see a pattern that will be repeated often in the *Iliad*: a woman improvises a solo lament, surrounded by a group of other women of similar status or circumstance; in this case, the slave women in the Myrmidon camp respond to the slave soloist, Briseis. This pattern recurs, in fact, throughout the history of Greek lament: the women of the family or village respond to the improvised performances of female soloists with stereotyped responses that seem to serve as an antiphonal refrain.[28] The passage above reveals another phenomenon that can also be observed in modern laments: a corpse on display reminds each mourner of their own personal tragedies and thereby intensifies their present sorrow for the death at hand.[29] In this case, of course,

[25] Skinner (1982) 267–68. It is the neuter dative singular of the Greek article used absolutely; see LSJ s.v., who note that in the MSS of Homer we find it accented both τῶ and τώ. Boris Maslov (2015) points out that this particle is also used in Pindar, *Isth*. 8.5 in a similar context of lamentation: "Therefore (τῶ), I too, although grieved at heart, am asked to invoke the golden Muse."

[26] See the discussions in Herzfeld (1981) 46–47 and Seremetakis (1990) 487–88, who explains that in the Mani such claims can be "legitimized by the invocation of shared histories . . . or emotional reciprocity between performer and the dead, which are sometimes integrated into the improvised lament." Holst-Warhaft (1992) 46 notes the claims of "emotional reciprocity between the performer and the dead" or "closeness to the dead" that in modern Greek laments are deployed in arguments about which women get to sit closest to the coffin or come into direct contact with the corpse.

[27] The verb *klaein* can refer both to a shrill or birdlike (i.e., nonverbal) shriek, but also, as we find it here, to a lament with comprehensible words; see Derderian (2001) 24–31; Beck (2005) 246 suggests that weeping is the primary force of the verb.

[28] Alexiou (2002) 13 ("the refrain is reduced to a perfunctory formula") and 133–35 and Dué (2002) 70–71. Seremetakis (1990) 490 describes refrains as "stylized sobbing at the end of each verse" as soloists "take" the lament from one and pass it on to another.

[29] See note 22 above. Holst-Warhaft (1992) 109–10 sees some similarity here with professional female mourners in modern Greece who deliberately focus "on some private suffering to acquire the necessary *ponos* for a performance."

Briseis encourages their response when she mentions the similar fatalities of her husband and brothers—deaths that the other slave women must have also witnessed in their own cities just prior to their capture.

Beginning with Margaret Alexiou and straight through to the recent work of Christos Tsagalis, scholars have suggested or argued that this short dirge of Briseis, like those of Hecuba and Helen in Book 24, represents a "typical" or "standard" form of the Homeric lament, which displays the kind of tripartite structure that we find in hymns:[30] first, an address to the corpse; second, a narrative that often contains praise for the dead;[31] and third, a renewed address to the dead man. I agree that these three laments do display a kind of tripartite form, but I would argue that they reflect neither the structure nor content of an encomium or hymn—indeed, the dead heroes in the *Iliad* are usually praised for domestic acts of kindness, rather than for their martial exploits on the battlefield. I suggest, in fact, that by assimilating lament to encomia or praise poetry scholars have missed some of the important semantic features of hexametrical lament, which aims in part at justifying a female performer's participation as a soloist by stressing her strong emotional ties with the deceased. This justification is clear in Briseis' lament: first, she addresses the dead man as a superlatively special individual ("by far the most beloved"); second, she defends this superlative designation by narrating some past kindness that Patroclus once performed for her; and third, she closes with a single-verse summary introduced by the particle τῶ that defends her right to a solo lament on the grounds of this personal proximity, despite the fact that she is neither kin nor spouse.

Shortly after Briseis concludes her dirge, Achilles begins his own lament of sorts, although the poet is careful to describe it as an act of remembering or memorial, rather than lament: "and he, as he remembered, heaved a heavy

[30] *Tripartite structure*: A widespread idea that goes back to Alexiou (2002) 132–34—see, e.g., Holst-Warhaft (1992) 112 and Coray (2016) 131–32. Tsagalis (2004) 30–32 and 46–47 suggests that the Book 24 laments most closely exhibit the tripartite structure, because they have a "true ritual character." Foley (1991) 169–70 and (1999) 188 offers a version of this tripartite structure that is closer to mine, because it stresses the personal intimacy between the female soloist and the dead male: (i) address to the slain warrior, (ii) narrative of personal history and consequences for the addressor, and (iii) readdress for a final intimacy. He, too, uses (pp. 187–98) the three laments in *Iliad* 24 to establish the pattern, and then uses the pattern to label Andromache's famous speech (*Iliad* 6.407–32) as both a "proto-lament" and a "formal lament." Swift (2010) 307 generally follows Tsagalis, but stresses, as do I, the need to establish the speaker's relationship with the dead person and to explain what the death means to her or how it will affect her life.

[31] Richardson (1993) 349–50, for example, calls the laments in *Iliad* 24 "praise poems" or "encomia, like later funeral speeches" and Tsagalis (2004) 167 suggests that by "focusing on an aretalogy of the deceased, the *goös* . . . agrees with the main preoccupation of heroic epic."

sigh and spoke (μνησάμενος δ᾽ ἀδινῶς ἀνενείκατο φώνησέν τε)." I stress this point, because modern Greek lament is sharply divided by gender: the women cluster around, touch the body, and make a great deal of noise with their groans and chanted laments, whereas the men usually weep quietly at the periphery.[32] So it is not without interest that, when Achilles speaks in a place usually occupied by a woman, he does indeed imitate some of the conventions of female lament (19.315–21):

> ἦ ῥά νύ μοί ποτε καὶ σύ, δυσάμμορε, φίλταθ᾽ ἑταίρων,
> αὐτὸς ἐνὶ κλισίῃ λαρὸν παρὰ δεῖπνον ἔθηκας
> αἶψα καὶ ὀτραλέως, ὁπότε σπερχοίατ᾽ Ἀχαιοὶ
> Τρωσὶν ἐφ᾽ ἱπποδάμοισι φέρειν πολύδακρυν Ἄρηα.
> νῦν δὲ σὺ μὲν κεῖσαι δεδαϊγμένος, αὐτὰρ ἐμὸν κῆρ
> ἄκμηνον πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος, ἔνδον ἐόντων,
> σῇ ποθῇ·
>
> Ah surely once, unlucky one, dearest of my comrades,
> you used to set out a savory meal in our hut
> swiftly and deftly when the Achaeans were making haste
> to bring tearful war against the horse-taming Trojans.
> But now you lie here mangled, and my heart
> will have nothing of meat and drink, though they are here at hand,
> through yearning for you.

He begins, for example, as Briseis did, with a superlative address to Patroclus as his "dearest of comrades" (315) and a recollection of a past kindness of the domestic sort (316-18). Achilles does not, on the other hand, begin with Patroclus' name and then, after briefly noting the battered state of his friend's body (319: νῦν δὲ σὺ μὲν κεῖσαι δεδαϊγμένος), he quickly turns his thoughts to his natal family far away (19.321–30):

> οὐ μὲν γάρ τι κακώτερον ἄλλο πάθοιμι,
> οὐδ᾽ εἴ κεν τοῦ πατρὸς ἀποφθιμένοιο πυθοίμην . . .
> ἠὲ τὸν ὅς Σκύρῳ μοι ἔνι τρέφεται φίλος υἱός,
> εἴ που ἔτι ζώει γε Νεοπτόλεμος θεοειδής.
> πρὶν μὲν γάρ μοι θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἐόλπει
> οἷον ἐμὲ φθίσεσθαι ἀπ᾽ Ἄργεος ἱπποβότοιο
> αὐτοῦ ἐνὶ Τροίῃ, σὲ δέ τε Φθίηνδε νέεσθαι,
> ὡς ἄν μοι τὸν παῖδα θοῇ ἐνὶ νηὶ μελαίνῃ
> Σκυρόθεν ἐξαγάγοις καί οἱ δείξειας ἕκαστα,
> κτῆσιν ἐμὴν δμῶάς τε καὶ ὑψερεφὲς μέγα δῶμα.
>
> Nothing worse than this could I suffer,
> not even though I should hear of the death of my own father . . .
> nor though it were he who in Scyrus is reared for me, my son well-beloved
> —if godlike Neoptolemus is still at least alive.

[32] See, e.g., Seremetakis (1991) 100: "women are vocal, emotionally demonstrative in public and the men are silent, inhibited and spatially separate."

> For until now the heart in my breast had expected
> that I alone should perish far from horse-pasturing Argos,
> here in the land of Troy, but that you (i.e., Patroclus) should return to Phthia,
> so that you might take my son in your swift, black ship
> from Scyrus, and show him all of my things
> —my possessions, my slaves, and my great high-roofed house.

The poet marks the conclusion of Achilles' lament externally, just as he did Briseis', with a communal groan: "Thus he spoke weeping and the old men groaned in response (ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γέροντες), as they remembered (μνησάμενοι) the property that each left behind in their halls." Here, then, Achilles apparently imitates the otherwise female practice of call-and-response lament and extends it to the world of men, where it almost seems to be a parody of a true lament:[33] Briseis and the slave women appropriately mourn the dead Patroclus by recalling their own dead warriors, whereas Achilles and the old men remember their material possessions back home, possessions that they will probably never see again.

Lohmann and Pucci have, in fact, pointed out the broad similarities between the laments of Briseis and Achilles, which can be summarized, albeit somewhat differently, as follows:[34]

	Briseis (14 verses)	**Achilles (15 verses)**
Mode	lament	remembering
Superlative address	"most beloved"	"dearest of comrades"
Intimate moments	hope in captivity	quick meals before battle
Lost future; voyage to Phthia	Patroclus would have led her there to be married to Achilles	Patroclus would have led Achilles' son there to see his house and possessions
Communal response	Slave women lament their own war dead	Old men remember their own possessions

Pucci rightly suggested, moreover, that the poet composed Achilles' lament as reaction to the preceding lament of Briseis. I would go even further and say that the *Iliad* poet is purposely playing with his audience's expectations of lament as a female genre, when, in the case of Achilles' performance, he seems to invent a parallel form of lament for men, a form that is unattested

[33] Murnaghan (1999) 210–11 notes the atypical gender of Achilles and his chorus of old men.
[34] Lohmann (1988) 13–32 and Pucci (1993).

in later times and probably has no basis in the Greek world.[35] This singularity is shown in the care the poet takes, as was mentioned above, to frame Achilles' speech and the old men's response, as forms of memorial, rather than lament.[36]

6.2 Trojan Laments for Hector

In the three laments for Hector near the end of *Iliad* 24, we see a similar contrast between the two shorter—and what have traditionally been dubbed the "standard"—versions of Hecuba and Helen and the longer, unorthodox version of Andromache. Trojan keening begins a bit earlier, however, when the poet, after describing the cortège of Hector approaching the city, shifts his attention to Cassandra, who is the first to catch sight of it, as she watches from the Pergamon, the citadel on the acropolis of Troy (697–703):

οὐδέ τις ἄλλος
ἔγνω πρόσθ' ἀνδρῶν καλλιζώνων τε γυναικῶν,
ἀλλ' ἄρα Κασσάνδρη ἰκέλη χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ
Πέργαμον εἰσαναβᾶσα φίλον πατέρ' εἰσενόησεν
ἑσταότ' ἐν δίφρῳ, κήρυκά τε ἀστυβοώτην·
τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἐφ' ἡμιόνων ἴδε κείμενον ἐν λεχέεσσι·
κώκυσέν τ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα. . . .

And no one else
of the men or beautifully belted women realized beforehand,
but, as it turned out, Cassandra, like golden Aphrodite,
because she had climbed up Pergamon, recognized her dear father,
as he stood in the chariot, and the herald, who is heard throughout the city.
But, when she caught sight of him (i.e., Hector) lying on cushions
on top of the mule-cart,
she broke into a wail. . . .

Here, as was mentioned earlier, the poet introduces Cassandra with precisely the same simile that he used to describe Briseis at the very start of her

[35] It is quite rare, in fact, for men to mourn so dramatically, especially a young man like Achilles, who throws himself on the ground, throws ashes on his head, and tears his hair like a woman; see my comments in Section 6.5 on the laments in *Iliad* 18. Holst-Warhaft (1992) 105–7 finds parallels for extravagant male mourning in medieval courtly poems and the Hebrew Bible, but not in the ancient Greek world. This kind of behavior might have been more acceptable, however, for aged fathers like Priam in *Iliad* 22.414 or Laertes in *Odyssey* 24.315–17; see McClure (1995) 156 and 201 for the feminized language of grieving fathers in some Euripidean plays: for example, Peleus in the *Andromache*, Oedipus in the *Phoenissae,* and Theseus in the *Hippolytus*.

[36] Foley (1991) 168: "In Homeric epic . . . the lament is a genre (or subgenre) assigned exclusively to women. On the two Iliadic occasions when a man is in position to take up the threnody, his thoughts turn not to the traditional content associated with this speech-act. . . ."

lament over Patroclus. It may also be relevant that Cassandra's position high up on the citadel is similar (as we shall see in Section 6.3) to that of Greek women, who traditionally celebrated the Adonia by shouting and wailing from the rooftop. In response to her initial cry, the Trojans run outside the gates to greet the dead hero and we hear that Hector's "dear wife and reverend mother were the first to leap up on the well-wheeled cart and tear their hair, while holding the head of the body, and the crowd that stood around them was weeping" (710–12). It is significant that only Andromache and Hecuba cradle Hector's head, a common feature of lamenting women, because, at the funeral proper a little later in Book 24, the poet will add without comment a third participant, Helen, who is not mentioned at all in this initial scene on the wagon. On the other hand, after this scene the poet says nothing more about Cassandra, even though she is introduced as the first woman to mourn the hero and who, as Hector's sister, could have easily performed the third lament and indeed might have done so in another Homeric version of the funeral. It would seem, therefore, that at the funeral proper, Helen has replaced Cassandra.

A few lines later, the poet quickly sketches the preparations for the funeral bier and the two kinds of performance distinguished by music and gender (24.719–24):

> οἳ δ' ἐπεὶ εἰσάγαγον κλυτὰ δώματα, τὸν μὲν ἔπειτα
> τρητοῖς ἐν λεχέεσσι θέσαν, παρὰ δ' εἶσαν ἀοιδοὺς
> θρήνων ἐξάρχους, οἵ τε στονόεσσαν ἀοιδὴν
> οἳ μὲν ἄρ' ἐθρήνεον, ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες.
> τῇσιν δ' Ἀνδρομάχη λευκώλενος ἦρχε γόοιο
> Ἕκτορος ἀνδροφόνοιο κάρη μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχουσα·
>
> After they brought him into the glorious palace,
> they placed him on a triple bier and along the side they sat the singers,
> the leaders of the *thrênoi*, the sort who sang the dolorous song,
> the men, for their part, were singing the *thrênos*, while the women groaned
> in response.
> But for the women white-armed Andromache began the lament (*goös*),
> while she held in her hands the head of man-slaying Hector.

As was mentioned earlier, Hector's funeral includes two kinds of performers, first the professional singers (so the generalizing *te* in 721), who are male and who sit by the corpse and sing some presumably melodic song that is described both as a *thrênos* and as an *aoidê*,[37] to which the women as a group groan in response, just as the slaves of the Myrmidons responded to the

[37] Alexiou (2002) 11–12.

lament of Briseis. But the songs of these male singers are neither quoted nor described and they are quickly followed by the solo laments of Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen. In order to reiterate the "standard" form of these female performances, we shall begin out of turn by analyzing the laments of Hecuba and Helen, because they are shorter (twelve and fourteen verses long) and quite similar to the lament of Briseis in *Iliad* 19.

The narrator tells us explicitly that Hecuba, like Briseis, is beginning a dirge (24.747: τῇσιν δ᾽ αὖθ᾽ Ἑκάβη ἀδινοῦ ἐξῆρχε γόοιο), which she starts with a superlative adjective addressed directly to the corpse, whose name, like that of Patroclus, appears at the very start of the verse in the vocative case (24.748–59):

> Ἕκτορ ἐμῷ θυμῷ πάντων πολὺ φίλτατε παίδων,
> ἦ μέν μοι ζωός περ ἐὼν φίλος ἦσθα θεοῖσιν·
> οἵ δ᾽ ἄρα σεῦ κήδοντο καὶ ἐν θανάτοιό περ αἴσῃ.
> ἄλλους μὲν γὰρ παῖδας ἐμοὺς πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεὺς
> πέρνασχ᾽ ὅν τιν᾽ ἕλεσκε πέρην ἁλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο,
> ἐς Σάμον ἔς τ᾽Ἴμβρον καὶ Λῆμνον ἀμιχθαλόεσσαν·
> σεῦ δ᾽ ἐπεὶ ἐξέλετο ψυχὴν ταναήκεϊ χαλκῷ,
> πολλὰ ῥυστάζεσκεν ἑοῦ περὶ σῆμ᾽ ἑτάροιο
> Πατρόκλου, τὸν ἔπεφνες· ἀνέστησεν δέ μιν οὐδ᾽ ὥς.
> νῦν δέ μοι ἑρσήεις καὶ πρόσφατος ἐν μεγάροισι
> κεῖσαι, τῷ ἴκελος ὅν τ᾽ ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων
> οἷς ἀγανοῖσι βέλεσσιν ἐποιχόμενος κατέπεφνεν.
>
> O Hector, in my heart the dearest by far of all my children,
> You were indeed dear to the gods when you were living perhaps
> and they, as it turns out, had a care for you even in your fated death,
> for other children of mine swift-footed Achilles,
> whichever one he caught, sold across the barren sea
> to Samothrace and Imbros and steaming Lemnos.
> But after he took away your life with sharp-pointed bronze,
> he kept dragging your body around the tomb of his comrade
> Patroclus, whom you killed, but he did not come back to life even thus!
> But now, to my mind, dewy and fresh in our halls
> you lie, similar to one whom silver-bowed Apollo
> has approached and killed with his gentle arrows.

In her lament, Hecuba is entirely concerned with Hector's death and corpse, which unlike the mangled body of Patroclus is fresh and hale, as if he had died in his sleep. Although in tone and content her dirge differs greatly from that of Briseis, the two performances are quite similar in length and form. Hecuba, however, defends Hector's superlative status differently, first, by noting that he was dear to the gods as well, and then by illustrating this divine favor with regard to his death: whereas her other sons were ignobly captured by Achilles and sold into slavery, Hector alone was killed and even

then, Achilles was unable to mutilate his body.[38] Hecuba's lament does seem, however, to be more of an encomium than a lament, for she does not stress her own grief or her personal connection with her son, but even so she does not praise him for his heroic valor, but rather for the gods' affection for him. This lack of intimacy may explain, moreover, why she does not end her lament with a summary statement and why there is no groaning response from the women: "Thus she spoke weeping and she stirred up unending lament" (760: ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσα γόον δ' ἀλίαστον ὄρινε).

The lament of Helen is also introduced by the narrator as a *goös* (761: τῇσι δ' ἔπειθ' Ἑλένη τριτάτη ἐξῆρχε γόοιο) and it runs as follows (762–75):

Ἕκτορ ἐμῷ θυμῷ δαέρων πολὺ φίλτατε πάντων,
ἦ μέν μοι πόσις ἐστὶν Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδής,
ὅς μ' ἄγαγε Τροίηνδ'· ὡς πρὶν ὤφελλον ὀλέσθαι.
ἤδη γὰρ νῦν μοι τόδε εἰκοστὸν ἔτος ἐστὶν
ἐξ οὗ κεῖθεν ἔβην καὶ ἐμῆς ἀπελήλυθα πάτρης·
ἀλλ' οὔ πω σεῦ ἄκουσα κακὸν ἔπος οὐδ' ἀσύφηλον·
ἀλλ' εἴ τίς με καὶ ἄλλος ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἐνίπτοι
δαέρων ἢ γαλόων ἢ εἰνατέρων εὐπέπλων,
ἢ ἑκυρή, ἑκυρὸς δὲ πατὴρ ὥς ἤπιος αἰεί,
ἀλλὰ σὺ τὸν ἐπέεσσι παραιφάμενος κατέρυκες
σῇ τ' ἀγανοφροσύνῃ καὶ σοῖς ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσι.
τῶ σέ θ' ἅμα κλαίω καὶ ἔμ' ἄμμορον ἀχνυμένη κῆρ·
οὐ γάρ τίς μοι ἔτ' ἄλλος ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ
ἤπιος οὐδὲ φίλος, πάντες δέ με πεφρίκασιν.

O Hector, in my heart the dearest by far of all my brothers-in-law,
for in truth, my husband is godlike Alexander,
who led me here to Troy. Would that I had died first!
For indeed now this is for me the twentieth year
from that time when I stepped away from there and abandoned my fatherland.
But not ever from you did I hear an evil or vilifying word,
And, if anyone even another in the halls defamed me,
one of the sisters-in-law or brothers-in-law or their well robed wives
or my mother-in-law—but my father-in-law was always like a gentle father
—you checked them by persuading them with words.
Therefore suffering at heart I mourn at the same time you and my unlucky self,
for no longer do I have anyone else in broad Troy
who is gentle to me and kind; but all people shudder at me.

Helen begins her dirge with a superlative address to Hector that is almost identical to the initial line of Hecuba's lament, replacing "sons" with "brothers-in-law" and changing the position of the word πάντων. In the middle section of her lament, she defends this superlative designation on

[38] Perkell (2008) 102–3.

the grounds that Hector always treated her kindly and shielded her from her malicious in-laws. And she finishes by using Hector's kindness to justify her participation as a soloist in the funeral, something that, as was mentioned above, probably would have surprised the poet's original audience. Her summary justification, however, spans two verses instead of one, an expansion that allows her to include herself—always the egoist[39]—among those being mourned: "Therefore (τῶ) . . . I mourn at the same time you and my unlucky self"—herself, presumably because without Hector she no longer has a protector in Troy.[40]

The laments of Helen, Hecuba, and Briseis are of similar size and have a similar syntax keyed to the hexametrical verse. This is patently not the case, however, with the lament of Andromache, who is the first of the three to perform at Hector's funeral, a performance that the poet also marks externally as a *goös* (24.723–24):

> τῇσιν δ᾽ Ἀνδρομάχη λευκώλενος ἦρχε γόοιο
> Ἕκτορος ἀνδροφόνοιο κάρη μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχουσα·
>
> And for the women white-armed Andromache led the dirge,
> holding in her hands the head of man-slaying Hector

Despite her central position at the funeral—holding the head of the corpse and speaking first—Andromache, like Achilles, produces an unorthodox lament, one that is longer than those of Hecuba and Helen and violates some of the norms we saw earlier. It begins as follows (12.725–32):

> ἄνερ ἀπ᾽ αἰῶνος νέος ὤλεο, κὰδ δέ με χήρην
> λείπεις ἐν μεγάροισι· πάϊς δ᾽ ἔτι νήπιος αὖτως
> ὃν τέκομεν σύ τ᾽ ἐγώ τε δυσάμμοροι, οὐδέ μιν οἴω
> ἥβην ἵξεσθαι· πρὶν γὰρ πόλις ἥδε κατ᾽ ἄκρης
> πέρσεται· ἦ γὰρ ὄλωλας ἐπίσκοπος, ὅς τέ μιν αὐτὴν
> ῥύσκευ, ἔχες δ᾽ ἀλόχους κεδνὰς καὶ νήπια τέκνα,
> αἳ δή τοι τάχα νηυσὶν ὀχήσονται γλαφυρῇσι,
> καὶ μὲν ἐγὼ μετὰ τῇσι·
>
> Husband, before your time as a youth you died and me a widow
> you are leaving behind in the palace. And there is a child still rather young,
> whom we bore, you and I, evil-fated as we are. Nor do I not think he
> will come of age, because before that this city from the battlements
> will be destroyed. For indeed you, our guardian, have perished, who
> used to protect it and who kept the devoted wives and small children safe,
> wives, who, I assure you, will soon be carried off in carved ships
> and I, too, with them.

[39] On the egoism of Helen's lament, see Tsagalis (2004) 99–100.

[40] Tsagalis (2004) 163 rightly notes the parallels between Helen here and Briseis, both of whom are devastated after the death of an important patron.

Whereas Achilles, Briseis, Hecuba, and Helen all began their laments by addressing the corpse either by name and/or in some superlative fashion, Andromache addresses the dead body rather flatly as "husband," without the obvious affection that we see in the laments of the others, and she bleakly predicts before the assembled people of Troy the grim fate that awaits herself, their son, and, indeed, all the Trojan wives and children, now that he is dead.

At this point, however, she turns abruptly in mid-verse to her son and speaks directly to him, thereby breaking what seems to be the traditional practice of addressing the corpse throughout (24.732–40):

> σὺ δ᾽ αὖ, τέκος, ἢ ἐμοὶ αὐτῇ
> ἕψεαι, ἔνθα κεν ἔργα ἀεικέα ἐργάζοιο,
> ἀθλεύων πρὸ ἄνακτος ἀμειλίχου, ἤ τις Ἀχαιῶν
> ῥίψει χειρὸς ἑλὼν ἀπὸ πύργου, λυγρὸν ὄλεθρον,
> χωόμενος, ᾧ δή που ἀδελφεὸν ἔκτανεν Ἕκτωρ
> ἢ πατέρ᾽, ἠὲ καὶ υἱόν, ἐπεὶ μάλα πολλοὶ Ἀχαιῶν
> Ἕκτορος ἐν παλάμῃσιν ὀδὰξ ἕλον ἄσπετον οὖδας.
> οὐ γὰρ μείλιχος ἔσκε πατὴρ τεὸς ἐν δαΐ λυγρῇ·
> τῶ καί μιν λαοὶ μὲν ὀδύρονται κατὰ ἄστυ.
>
> and you in turn, child, will follow with me
> to a place where you will labor at ugly tasks,
> toiling for some ungentle master, or else some Achaean
> will seize you by the arm and hurl you from the wall, a woeful death,
> someone angered because Hector slew his brother perhaps,
> or his father, or his son, since many Achaeans at the hands
> of Hector have bitten the vast earth with their teeth;
> for not at all gentle was your father in woeful war.
> Therefore, for him,[41] too, the people are mourning throughout the town.

At this point Andromache seems to be bringing her solo lament to a close, because, in the last quoted verse here, we find the beginning of traditional closing formula ("Therefore [τῶ] I mourn you . . .), but, here, because she is addressing her son, she refers to Hector in the third person (740: μιν).[42] Thus, instead of claiming her own right to perform this crucial female role at a family funeral on the basis of personal intimacy, Andromache acknowledges the public context of the funeral and asserts that, since Hector has killed so

[41] The syntax of this last line (740) is confusing, but it must be that she is referring to Hector, not her son; see, e.g., Foley (1999) 196. MacLeod (1982) ad loc. suggests that Astyanax is not even present.

[42] I place a full stop at the end of this verse, because of its summary nature—in the other laments it is always the final line—and because in the very next line Andromache turns back to address Hector. All of the editions that I have consulted, however, place a comma here, usually without comment, but presumably to keep together the *men*-and-*de* construction in lines 740–41. Most scholars note how all three verses taken together provide a kind of crescendo of grief, in which the people mourn (740), the parents suffer (741), but Andromache suffers most of all (742). See Richardson (1993) loc. cit.; Tsagalis (2004) 107–8; and Brügger (2017) loc. cit.

many Greeks, "therefore" (740: τῶ) it is the Trojan people or army (740: λαοὶ) who have this right to lament. Here, however, the praise of Hector's skill on the battlefield (737–38) is tragically subverted, because it is given as the possible reason for the woeful death that she imagines for her son.

If Andromache had ended her dirge here, after only sixteen verses, it would have been only two verses longer than the laments of Briseis and Helen, but she does not. Instead, she switches from the third-person description in the summary formula ("therefore for him . . . the people are mourning") and once again addresses her husband's corpse (24.741–45):

> ἀρητὸν δὲ τοκεῦσι γόον καὶ πένθος ἔθηκας,
> Ἕκτορ, ἐμοὶ δὲ μάλιστα λελείψεται ἄλγεα λυγρά.
> οὐ γάρ μοι θνήσκων λεχέων ἐκ χεῖρας ὄρεξας,
> οὐδέ τί μοι εἶπες πυκινὸν ἔπος, οὔ τέ κεν αἰεὶ
> μεμνῄμην νύκτάς τε καὶ ἤματα δάκρυ χέουσα.
>
> But grief unspeakable and sorrow have you brought on your parents,
> Hector, and for me most of all will woeful sorrows be left.
> For at your death you did not stretch out your hands to me from our bed,
> nor speak to me any intimate word that I might
> have recalled night and day with the shedding of tears.

Most scholars, from Alexiou to Tsagalis, claim that Andromache's entire solo fits their standard tripartite model, in part, because the narrator himself marks it externally as a dirge (*goös*).[43] But, as we have seen, Andromache deviates greatly from the internal pattern described above. Instead of addressing Hector at the start by name and with some "superlative expression of affection," she waits until the end, where, although she finally begins a verse just as Hecuba and Helen do (Ἕκτορ, ἐμοὶ), she goes on to describe Hector's superlative gift for making her miserable: "But for me *most of all* you have left behind woeful pains." Her comments, moreover, about slavery and baby killing have seemed—to modern readers at least—bitter and openly critical of the entire heroic venture that motivated Hector[44] and that undergirds epic war poetry in general: taking risks to gain glory, instead of falling back defensively, as she urged him to do in her "proto-lament" in Book 6.[45] Equally unexpected is her final reproach that he has robbed her of

[43] Holst-Warhaft (1992) 110–13; Alexiou (2002) 183; and Foley (1991) 44.

[44] *Bitterness*: Holst-Warhaft (1992) 112 and Perkell (2008) 98–101; *Criticism*: Murnaghan (1999) 204 ("offers the possibility of accessing the authentic voices of women"); Derderian (2001) 10 ("anti-epic"); and Perkell (2008) 109 n. 6 ("ironic contrast").

[45] Foley (1999) 189–98 gives a close analysis of this speech as a "proto-lament," in two parts, with both parts exhibiting a tripartite structure. See also Perkell (2008).

a final embrace and an "intimate word" in their marital bed (744).[46] I suggest, therefore, that in Andromache's somewhat confused and double lament for husband and son, the poet dramatically enacts her discordant mix of sadness and anger by displacing the features traditionally used to frame the lament—superlative address and summary formula—and thereby fracturing the traditional structure of the lament and rendering it even more dolorous. The poet, nonetheless, marks the end of her lament externally in the usual manner (24.746: ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσ᾽, ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες) by having the Trojan women groan in response and then by quoting in quick succession the more traditional dirges of Hecuba and Helen that were discussed earlier.

Scholars have also fretted (rightly) about the odd inclusion of Helen as a soloist at the funeral, suggesting that, although her lament seems to be quite similar in length and form to those of Briseis and Hecuba, her lament in the last and most important position has more to do with the poet's desire to bring closure to the monumental poem than to the royal funeral.[47] Helen's actual lament, moreover, triggers wildly different responses in modern readers, ranging from "petty and self absorbed" [48] to an evocation of both her "helplessness" and her newfound role as "critic" of Trojan society.[49] But regardless of how we interpret each of the laments in *Iliad* 24, it is striking that none of these three women praises Hector for his military might or bravery, except perhaps Andromache in the subversive manner mentioned above.[50]

Because in one way or another the poet externally identifies all five of the Myrmidon and Trojan laments as laments (*goöi*), most scholars treat them all as traditional dirges.[51] We have seen, however, that one can more narrowly distinguish a shorter, standard type by comparing how the poet internally marks beginnings and endings of the dirges themselves:

[46] Some understand πυκινὸν ἔπος to refer to the compactness or conciseness of Hector's practical advice, e.g., MacLeod (1982) 152 ("a wise word"); Holst-Warhaft (1992) 112 ("last words of wisdom"); or Brügger (2017) 265 ("words that remain fixed in the memory, . . . e.g. words of thanks, or consolation, counsel, prophecy"). Alexiou (2002) 183–84, on the other hand, sees it as a "parting word of comfort" and gives some modern Greek parallels. I use the translation of Foley (1999) 196 ("intimate word"); see also Roisman (2006) 32 ("hints at a satisfying marital life") and Perkell (2008) 101, who also stresses the intimacy of her remarks.

[47] Monsacré (1984) 119 and Perkell (2008) 158–59 note that Helen is the first and last female to speak in the poem and that she seems to be important to the poet as a kind of alter ego, who in the *teichoskopia* provides mini-biographies of the Greeks and who is said to be weaving her own version of the Trojan War in pictures. For the third and last position as the most important according to the Homeric "ascending scale of affection," see Perkell (2008) 106.

[48] Richardson (1993) ad loc. and Perkell (2008) 113–14 n. 49.

[49] Roisman (2006) 28 and 33.

[50] Perkell (2008) 108, who contrasts the laudatory laments for Beowulf.

[51] Beck (2005) 246 comes close to my claims here, when she notes that we can see the "typical characteristics of formal lament" most clearly and consistently in *Iliad* 24.

Standard

Briseis (14 verses long)

19.287: O Patroclus, to wretched me by far the most beloved in my heart

19.300: Therefore (τῶ) I unceasingly mourn you dead, but always honey sweet

Hecuba (12 verses long)

24.748: O Hector, in my heart the dearest of all my children

[no summary justification for her lament]

Helen (14 verses long)

24.762: O Hector, in my heart the dearest by far of all my brothers-in-law

24.775: Therefore (τῶ) suffering I mourn at the same time you and my unlucky self

Unorthodox

Achilles (23 verses long)

19.315: Ah surely once, unlucky one, dearest of my comrades

[no summary justification for his lament]

Andromache (21 verses long)

24.739: Therefore (τῶ) for him, too, the people mourn throughout the town

24.741: O Hector, but for me most of all you have left woeful pains

We can see, therefore, that the shorter laments of Briseis, Hecuba, and Helen internally display a consistent form that almost always begins with a superlative address and ends with the summary justification—a format that allows both the poet and his audience to compare and contrast the differences between these traditional laments and those of Achilles and Andromache. It may seem a bit arbitrary or circular, of course, to define a standard form among the many laments in the *Iliad* and then use it as a model against which we measure the others, but this is precisely the method that scholars traditionally use when they identify, for example, a Homeric type-scene of arming, hospitality, or animal sacrifice—and then note how in some places the poet expands or otherwise deviates from the model, often for some special narrative or dramatic effect.[52]

[52] Edwards (1987) 71–79.

6.3 Ritual Laments for Adonis

As we saw at the start of this chapter, the *Iliad* poet assimilates both Briseis and Cassandra to "golden Aphrodite," at the very point when they first catch sight of the corpse of a beloved young man and then begin to mourn. He does so, I suggest, because for his audience, at least, no laments were as intense as the dirge of the goddess over the corpse of the youthful Adonis. Post-Homeric sources show us, moreover, that women did, in fact, directly imitate the grieving Aphrodite and her retinue in annual celebrations of the Adonia. Our earliest evidence comes from the fragments of Sappho. Dioscorides, for example, a Hellenistic poet who presumably had access to her entire corpus, mentions generally that in her poetry Sappho could be heard "lamenting with Aphrodite," and other Greek authors suggest that she also lamented her female friends when they died.[53] And among her fragments we find evidence for at least one formal lament for Adonis, not in hexameters, but in another stichic verse, the greater Asclepiadean catalectic (Frag. 140a):[54]

> κατθνάσκει, Κυθέρη, ἄβρος Ἄδωνις· τί κε θεῖμεν;
> καττύπτεσθε, κόραι, καὶ κατερείκεσθε χίτωνας
>
> "Delicate Adonis is dying, Cythera! What should we do?"
> "Beat your breasts, maidens, and tear your chitons!"

The alliteration here of initial *kappa* and *chi* is extraordinary and suggests some special purpose for the second verse, perhaps as part of a refrain. And indeed, as we saw in the case of Sappho's hexametrical *epithalamia*, scholars sometimes suggest that this text was also designed to be performed publicly, in this case at a local Lesbian festival of the Adonia.[55] In any event, it certainly seems to be a dramatic text of some sort, in which a chorus of maidens address a solo singer as "Aphrodite" and she, in turn, responds, an antiphonal feature that we shall also see below in Bion's hexametrical *Epitaph for Adonis*. Sappho's Frag. 168, an invocation of Adonis himself (ὦ τὸν Ἄδωνιν), probably also belonged to this performance and it exhibits a rare "exclamatory accusative" that also shows up in later laments for the youth. All this suggests that a stichic lament for Adonis was already fully developed in seventh-century BCE Lesbos.[56] But how much earlier than that? Some

[53] What follows is closely indebted to Lardinois (2001), who gives a much more detailed discussion.
[54] I use the translation and follow the interpretation of Lardinois (2001) 77. For the meter, see Hunter (2010) 285, who notes that the greater Asclepiad "is, in its effect, not unlike dactylic rhythm."
[55] See, e.g., Lardinois (2001) 77.
[56] Versnel (1990) 103.

suggest that this kind of dirge arrived in Greece only around the time of Sappho,[57] but this is only an argument from silence about the previous centuries, and in fact the story of Adonis and Aphrodite appears in connection with the Anatolian city of Smyrna in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* and in a lost fifth-century epic of Panyassis. [58] It is quite clear, moreover, that the Adonia came from the Near East to the Greeks via Phoenicia and Cyprus, that Adonis' name derives from "Adon," the Semitic word for "Lord," and that the cult is well attested on Bronze Age Cyprus.[59] This is the tradition, I suggest, that is reflected in the two *Iliad* passages, which assimilate two Anatolian women, Briseis and Cassandra, to golden Aphrodite at the very moment they begin to lament a fallen youth.[60]

We next find good evidence in a number of Attic comedies performed toward the end of the classical period, which suggest that prostitutes and citizen wives both performed ritual laments for Adonis in small groups at home.[61] Most notable is a scene in the *Lysistrata* where a cranky old man recalls the rites that some Athenian women inauspiciously performed during the political debate over the ill-fated Sicilian invasion (387–96; trans. Henderson):

> So has the women's profligacy flared up again, . . . this worship of Adonis on the rooftops? I heard it all once before while sitting in the Assembly. Demostratus (bad luck to him!) was saying that we should send an armada to Sicily, while his wife was dancing and yelling "Alas Adonis!" (αἰαῖ Ἄδωνιν). Then Demostratus was saying that we should register some Zakynthian hoplites, but she (i.e., his wife again) was getting drunk on the roof and saying, "Beat your breasts for Adonis!" (κόπτεσθ' Ἄδωνιν). . . .

Despite the comic hyperbole, the passage provides us with some important details about the festival and its laments.[62] It seems that at the end of the fifth

[57] *Seventh century*: Reed (1995) 317 and (1997) 18; *Archaic period*: Burkert (1979a) 105–8.

[58] Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* (Frag. 139) and Panyassis, Frags. 28–29 (West); see West (1985) 149–52 for discussion.

[59] Dillon (2002) 164 for a recent summary and bibliography.

[60] This kind of ritual was probably Near Eastern in origin. Around the same time period, for instance, Ezekiel complains that women are weeping for Tammuz at the North Gate of Jerusalem (8.14–15) and the cult can be traced back much earlier to the Sumerian worship of Dummuzi; see Versnel (1990) 103–5 and Reed (1997) 18–19.

[61] The comic playwrights Pherecrates, Platon, Cratinus, Diphilus, and Aristophanes all poked fun at the Adonia festival; see Dillon (2002) 163–67.

[62] Weill (1966) uses this passage and some contemporary vase paintings to reconstruct some aspects of the rooftop celebration; see also Dillon (2002) 164–65, who discusses a scene in Menander's *Samia*.

century BCE the wife of a prominent citizen led other Athenian women in a rooftop lament for Adonis and that in hindsight these dirges were thought to be a terrible omen, because they occurred while the men in the Assembly were making a tragic decision that eventually resulted in the early deaths of so many Athenian soldiers. Or to turn it around, we might also say that mourning Adonis in the late-fifth-century Athens had become so much more noticeable and painful, because of the mounting war casualties, and that Adonis "becomes a substitute for a husband, son or brother."[63]

The Sappho fragments adduced earlier suggested that on Lesbos the lament for Adonis was an antiphonal performance by a group of females—who inform Aphrodite about Adonis' death and ask what they should do—and a solo performer, who instructs the group to beat their breasts and tear their clothes for Adonis. The *Lysistrata* passage preserves, in fact, a plural imperative, "beat your breasts!" (κόπτεσθ'), that recalls the one in the Sappho fragment (κατττύπτεσθε), suggesting that Athenian and Lesbian women performed similar rituals and that Demostratus' wife, perhaps because of her higher social status, was the leader of such a group and performed the role of Aphrodite, as we also seem to see in Sappho. The commands quoted by Aristophanes are, in this case, fitted to iambic trimeter, the usual meter for comic dialogue, so we cannot tell in which meter they were originally composed, but we can see, nonetheless, that one of the phrases allegedly used by Demostratus' wife, αἰαῖ Ἄδωνιν, deploys the same exclamatory accusative that we saw in the Lesbian poet. Plutarch tells us, finally, that these Athenian rituals took the form of neighborhood funerals celebrated by small groups of women, who, while gathered around small effigies of Adonis laid out for burial, beat their breasts and lamented.[64] In all of these sources, therefore, the lament itself seems to be the central part of the festival[65] and it was apparently performed without musical instruments, as is appropriate for small,

[63] Simms (1998) 137: "Adonis, then, becomes, in effect, a substitute for a husband, son, brother. During the late fifth century women had a heightened need for such 'substitute mourning.'"

[64] Plutarch *Life of Alcibiades* 19.3: ". . . especially in connection with the Adonia. This took place at that time, and little images like dead folk carried forth to burial were in many places exposed to view by the women, who mimicked burial rites, beat their breasts, and sang laments (*thrênoi*)"; see also *Life of Nicias* 13.7: "The women were celebrating at that time the festival of Adonis, and in many places in the city little images of the god were laid out for burial and funeral rites were held around them with wailing cries of the women." In the second or third century CE, Alciphron *Letters* 14.8, composed a fictive invitation to the Adonia, asking a woman to bring a small figurine (presumably of Adonis) and a funerary couch for it.

[65] Simms (1998) 131: "The lament is the one constant in our sources—from Sappho on Lesbos, to Pherekrates and Aristophanes in Athens, to Theocritus in Alexandria."

ad hoc celebrations in homes or on rooftops; it is best, therefore, to assume that these laments for Adonis, like those composed by Sappho, were chanted or shouted in stichic verses, rather than sung.[66]

We have evidence, moreover, for such performances in other parts of the Greek world. A fourth-century female poet, Praxilla of Sicyon, like Sappho, left behind poems in a variety of meters, including one in dactylic hexameters called *Adonis*, which was ridiculed in antiquity because she represents Adonis as replying (*PMG* 747), when asked what things he missed in Hades, with a list that includes "ripe cucumbers" (or "figs" in some versions). Regardless of its literary merit, the genre of this poem is difficult to pin down: the title *Adonis* and the hexametrical meter both suggest a hymn, but in the fourth century BCE Adonis was not a divinity to whom one would naturally address a hymn—indeed, all of the other poems that concern him seem to be laments, rather than hymns. The mimetic hexametrical performance embedded in Theocritus' *Idyll* 15 is, in fact, introduced with a similar title: "Hush Praxinoa, the Argive woman's daughter is about 'to sing the *Adonis*' (τὸν Ἄδωνιν ἀείδειν)." The fact that a woman from Argos sings this song and that a poetess of Sicyon composed another, may reflect a wider Peloponnesian tradition of such laments.[67] The forty-five hexameters of the embedded song in *Idyll* 15 are first addressed, however, to Aphrodite, not Adonis (100–135), and only at the very end do we find a shift in focus to Adonis, who is never in fact named (131–35):

> νῦν μὲν Κύπρις ἔχοισα τὸν αὐτᾶς χαιρέτω ἄνδρα·
> ἀῶθεν δ' ἄμμες νιν ἅμα δρόσῳ ἀθρόαι ἔξω
> οἰσεῦμες ποτὶ κύματ' ἐπ' ἀιόνι πτύοντα,
> λύσασαι δὲ κόμαν καὶ ἐπὶ σφυρὰ κόλπον ἀνεῖσαι
> στήθεσι φαινομένοις λιγυρᾶς ἀρξεύμεθ' ἀοιδᾶς.
>
> Now let Cypris rejoice,[68] as she embraces her man,
> but early in the morning we, with the dew still on the ground,
> all of us together will carry him out to the plashing waves by the sea,
> and, after we untie our hair and let fall our robes to our ankles,
> with breasts bared we shall begin our shrill song.

[66] Although Plutarch *Life of Alcibiades* 19.3, does say the women "beat their breasts and *sang* laments," Aristophanes, an earlier source by far, has his character say that Demostratus' wife was "yelling" and "saying" her lines, not singing them.

[67] Pausanias 2.20.5 says there was a building in Argos at which the Adonia was performed, suggesting a civic rather than domestic setting for the lament; see Reed (1995) 334; Simms (1998) 125; and Dillon (2002) 163. See at the end of Section 6.4 for evidence that the Argives sent women and young girls to lament the Adonis-like figure Linus, evidence that again suggests state involvement.

[68] Gow (1952) and Dover (1971) both ad loc. take χαιρέτω in its common meaning "farewell," in Gow's translation thus: "And now farewell to Cypris as she clasps her lover." The *men*-and-*de* construction suggests, however, a more poignant juxtaposition with what follows, i.e. (paraphrase), "*for now* let Cypris be happy holding her lover in her arms, *but tomorrow*. . . ."

These verses seem, then, to describe yet another local version of the Adonia, this one in Alexandria and involving the procession of a manikin to the seashore (perhaps in a coffin as in Attica), while the women bare (and presumably beat) their breasts and start up a "shrill song" (*ligura aoidê*), a lament, no doubt, performed in unison. The last verses of this embedded song finally address the young lover directly, first by describing his unique ability to visit both earth and Acheron and then with this request (143–44): "Be favorable, dear Adonis, next year, as well! Even now you have come to us in good cheer and, whenever you return, you will return as a friend." One could, then, well imagine that a few generations earlier Praxilla wrote her *Adonis* for a similar celebration.

It is also in the late Hellenistic period that Bion composed his *Epitaph for Adonis* in dactylic hexameters, and (as we saw at the start of this chapter) he did so in a fashion typical of the mimetic poems of that epoch, by both describing and enacting a ritual lament for Adonis performed by a female mistress of ceremonies and a group of women,[69] much as we imagined the performances on Lesbos and in Athens. Because he is so late chronologically, it is tempting to place Bion deep down in the Platonic cave of imitations and to suggest that he chooses his meter in imitation of Theocritus, who in turn imitates Erinna, who in turn imitates the poet of the *Iliad*, who was the first to render prose laments in dactylic hexameters. But part of the challenge of composing a mimetic poem, as we saw in the case of *Idyll* 2 or 18, was to model the poem on traditional ritual performances that would be recognizable to the reader, and since Bion's poem is the only extant mimetic version of the traditional lament for Adonis performed on the second day of the celebration,[70] we should begin with the idea that he is imitating, as well as possible, the hexametrical meter of the original—or at least some analogous stichic meter—as well as the interplay between the soloist and her antiphonal comrades. In short, the cleverness and humor of Bion's imitation surely depends upon the audience's knowledge of the traditional form that was performed annually by women in a number of places in the Greek world.

In Bion's lament, however, the group of mourners refer to the Erotes as fellow mourners, who often echo their cries:

> Αἰάζω τὸν Ἄδωνιν, "ἀπώλετο καλὸς Ἄδωνις"·
> "ὤλετο καλὸς Ἄδωνις," ἐπαιάζουσιν Ἔρωτες (1–2)

[69] Reed (1997) 15–16 and Hopkinson (2015) 504.
[70] Wilamowitz (1900) 10–12; Estevez (1981) 36; and Fantuzzi (1985) 152–65.

I mourn Adonis: "Fair Adonis is dead!"
"Fair Adonis is dead!" the Loves mourn in reply.

Αἰάζω τὸν Ἄδωνιν, ἐπαιάζουσιν Ἔρωτες (6 and 10)
I mourn Adonis; the Erotes mourn in reply.

"αἰαῖ τὴν Κυθέρειαν" ἐπαιάζουσιν Ἔρωτες (28 and 86)
"Alas for Kythereia" the Erotes mourn in reply.

ὣδ' ὁλοφύρατο Κύπρις· ἐπαιάζουσιν Ἔρωτες
"αἰαῖ τὴν Κυθέρειαν· ἀπώλετο καλὸς Ἄδωνις" (61–62)

Thus, Kypris lamented; the Erotes mourn in reply:
"Alas for Kythereia; fair Adonis is dead!"

Like the mimetic poems of Theocritus and Callimachus, these refrains describe present actions (αἰάζω/ἐπαιάζουσιν), although in some places (in quotation marks above) they also mimic cultic shouts, which use—like those in Sappho and the *Lysistrata*—the same "exclamatory accusative" (αἰαῖ Ἄδωνιν) and a significant amount of alliteration, albeit here of initial alpha and epsilon, rather than kappa. The repeated report, moreover, that "fair Adonis is dead" (ὤλετο καλὸς Ἄδωνις) is clearly drawn from the same tradition as the initial announcement in the Sapphic fragment, which might have also served as a refrain: "Delicate Adonis is dying, Cythera!" (Frag. 140a: κατθνάσκει, Κυθέρη, ἄβρος Ἄδωνις). Bion's lament ends by describing how the wedding god, Hymenaeus, extinguishes the torches that he was carrying to celebrate the wedding of Adonis and Aphrodite and switches from the traditional refrain of the *hymenaios* to that of a dirge (86–90).

In terms of content there are only a few parallels with the earlier Homeric laments of Briseis and the Trojan women, presumably because between his refrains Bion fills his poem almost entirely with narrative or description—Aphrodite's reactions to the news of Adonis' death (partially quoted at the start of this chapter), the sight of his corpse in the forest, and the return of the body to her bed—all of which may follow the ritual sequence of the Adonia.[71] The closest parallels with the *Iliad* are, as we saw earlier, when the sight of the young man's bloodied corpse triggers Aphrodite's dirge (39–41), just as it did the laments of Briseis and Cassandra, and a little earlier in the poem, when the description of the goddess (19–27: "Aphrodite, having let down her hair, rushes through the woods, mourning, unbraided"), seems

[71] Reed (1997).

to recall Andromache's first reaction to the news of Hector's death, when she rushes madly to the wall and casts, as she faints, her elaborate headgear to the ground, including the veil that Aphrodite gave her on her wedding day (*Iliad* 22.46–72).[72] Scholars have assumed that in both cases Bion has these Homeric passages in mind, but who is to say? One could argue plausibly, in fact, that the *Iliad* poet, by assimilating both Briseis and Cassandra to Aphrodite, as they begin to lament, and by mentioning Aphrodite's veil at the precise moment when Andromache learns of Hector's death, that the poet of the *Iliad* is using his audience's knowledge of the Adonia and its lamentations to emphasize the intensity of the grief of these tragic mourners in the *Iliad*.

6.4 Other Funerary Laments

We have some additional evidence for other laments performed in dactylic hexameters in honor of figures similar to Adonis. On Achilles' shield in *Iliad* 18, for example, we find the grape harvest and vintage, and a performance by youths and maidens of the "Linus song" (569–71):

> τοῖσιν δ' ἐν μέσσοισι πάις φόρμιγγι λιγείῃ
> ἱμερόεν κιθάριζε, λίνον δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν ἄειδε
> λεπταλέῃ φωνῇ· τοὶ δὲ ῥήσσοντες ἀμαρτῇ
> μολπῇ τ' ἰυγμῷ τε ποσὶ σκαίροντες ἔποντο.
>
> And in their midst a boy with a clear-toned lyre
> made pleasant music and to it sang sweetly the "Linus"
> with his delicate voice; and they beating the earth in unison
> followed on with skipping feet and dance and shouting.

The scholiasts to this passage preserve the opening lines of this "Linus song" in two different forms—in hexameters in the T Scholia and a lyric meter (albeit restored) in the B Scholia.[73] Before the deficiencies of the B Scholia were well understood, Bergk and others considered the hexametrical version to be a poor imitation of the lyric, but more recently Van der Valk has indeed

[72] Fantuzzi (1985) ad loc. Seaford (1993) 117–19 and Tsagalis (2008) 1–29 discuss in detail the Dionysiac background to the *Iliad* passage, which seems to cast Andromache in the role of a maenad.

[73] Campbell (1993) 265 n. 2: "Scholiast T and Eustathius give a hexametrical version of the song, calling it a Theban inscription: the (i.e., lyric) version in Scholia B may in fact have been derived from it." The lyric version is introduced as the song that the Muses sang at Linus' death ("For he [i.e., Linus] was mourned by the Muses as follows"): ὦ Λίνε πᾶσι θεοῖσι τετιμένε, σοὶ γὰρ πρώτῳ μέλος/ ἔδωκαν ἀθάνατοι ἀνθρώποισι φωναῖς λιγυραῖς ἀεῖσαι/ Φοῖβος δέ σε κότῳ ἀναιρεῖ, Μοῦσαι δέ σε θρηνέουσιν ("Oh Linus, honored by all the gods—for you were the first to whom the gods gave a song for men to sing in clear voices. Phoebus killed you in anger, but the Muses mourn you!")

suggested the opposite.[74] But its performance context remains unclear. The *Iliad* poet describes it as a kind of working song at vintage time, perhaps to keep time as the young men and maidens haul the grapes,[75] but the scholia refer to it as a mourning song: "They say that Linus was buried at Thebes and honored with mourning songs (θρηνώδεσιν ᾠδαῖς) that they called 'Linus songs' (λινῳδίας) and that 'Linus' is itself the name of a mourning song (μέλος θρηνήτικον) sung in a plain style (μετ' ἰσχνοφωνίας)."[76] The two genres need not, of course, be mutually exclusive, since the crushing of grapes is, in fact, accompanied by a lament in some cultures, including the modern Greek.[77]

The hexametrical version is said to have been "his epitaph in Thebes":[78]

> ὦ Λίνε πᾶσι θεοῖσι τετιμένε, σοὶ γὰρ ἔδωκαν
> ἀθάνατοι πρώτῳ μέλος ἀνθρώποισι ἀεῖσαι . . .
> ἐν ποδὶ δεξιτερῷ. Μοῦσαι δέ σε θρήνεον αὐταί
> μυρόμεναι μολπῇσιν, ἐπεὶ λίπες ἠλίου αὐγάς.
>
> O Linus, honored by all the gods, for the immortals granted
> to you first to sing a song for mortal men . . .
> on the right foot(?). And the Muses themselves mourned you
> weeping in their songs and dances, when you left the light of the sun.

These verses begin, in fact, like the Homeric laments, by addressing the dead man directly and as one "honored by all the gods," which is high praise, of course, because, as far as we know, only Achilles had the equivalent honor of the Muses singing at his funeral. For proof, we are told that Linus was the first mortal to be inspired to sing (ἀεῖσαι) a "song" (μέλος). The text as we have it is missing at least one verse in the middle, where the reference to the "right foot" probably once referred to some kind of stamping or movement of the feet, as we see above in the passage from the *Iliad* and as we also saw in the description of the Theocritean *epithalamium*. In both the *Iliad* and the four extant verses from Linus' "epitaph," the vocabulary itself points to lyric: in

[74] Van der Valk (1963) 154–55.

[75] Karanika (2014) 117–32 for a full discussion as a work song.

[76] See, e.g., Alexiou (2002) 57–58, who relates it to other Near Eastern laments like those for Adonis.

[77] Edwards (1985) loc. cit. There is also a significant crossover between lament and vintage songs in modern Greece, where—similar to "The Grim Reaper," the widespread moniker in grain-producing countries—"Death" is addressed in laments as the "Grape Harvester"; see Karanika (2014) 123–27.

[78] *IGM* 18 = *PMG* 880. Whereas the four hexameters quoted here do not fit comfortably into the genre of epitaph, the two poems subsequently quoted do, because they are much shorter and mention the grave: κρύπτω τὸν θεὸν ἄνδρα Λίνον, Μουσῶν θεράποντα (*IGM* 248: "I [i.e., the grave] conceal the divine man Linus, servant of the Muses") and τὸν πολυθήνητον Λίνον Αἴλινον ἥδε πατρῴα/ Φοιβείοις βέλεσιν γῆ κατέχει φθίμενον (*IGM* 240: "This, his fatherland, holds much-lamented Linus Ailinos, who was slain by the arrows of Phoebus."

the *Iliad* the boy plays a lyre (κιθάριζε) as he sings (ἄειδε) and in the "epitaph" the Muses teach him "to sing a song." But here, as was discussed at the end of Chapter 1, we run into the internal fiction or fantasy that hexameters were sung to the lyre. On the other hand, it could well be the case that the scholiasts are describing different versions of the same performance, just as we saw above in Section 2.3 with the "begging songs," which were chanted in dactylic hexameters in Athens but sung in other stichic meters in other places.[79] Finally, we should note that although Adonis was clearly Semitic in origin and although the Greeks associated their "Linus song" with Adonis and with other "dying gods" in Egypt, Phoenicia, and Cyprus,[80] the Linus song itself was apparently fully assimilated to Greek practice. Indeed, the first-century BCE author Konon tells us that the Argives also "send women and young girls to lament (*thrênein*) Linus" and that for this reason "the Linus-song is sung by later poets in connection with all kinds of sufferings."[81] In the late-Hellenistic period, in short, the "Linus song" seems to have been used as a generic word for lament.

Erinna's *Distaff* was another lament in dactylic hexameters, this one composed around the mid-fourth century BCE and greatly admired in antiquity.[82] It is clear from later epigrams written about Erinna and her poem, as well as from her extant fragments, that part or all of this poem took the form of a dirge, in which Erinna addresses and mourns her girlfriend Baucis, who died on the eve of her wedding.[83] Aside from some scattered quotations by later authors, fragments of the poem survive mainly in a second-century CE papyrus edition, which preserves the beginnings or ends of two columns and one tattered column of twenty lines. A stichometric sign near the end of the

[79] With regard to the Linus song, see, e.g., Thalmann (1984) 118, who imagines young men and women who "move in time with the music and also sing—perhaps a refrain for the song," although he concludes that "we should think of these songs as set to lyric meters . . . rather than dactylic hexameters."

[80] Sappho, for example, was said to have merged the song for Adonis with that of Linus (Pausanias 9.29.2). Herodotus (2.79) claims that the Linus song was being sung in Egypt, Phoenicia, Cyprus, and elsewhere for individuals with different names: for example, in Egypt for a youth named Maneros, who was said to have been the son of the king who died young. For discussion, see Alexiou (2002) 56–58 and Karanika (2014) 123–28. The grain harvest produced a similar combination of work song and lament that was associated in Anatolia with the figure of Lityerses, the son of Midas, who was killed during the harvest and whose death was then recalled each year by male laments during the grain harvest; see Alexiou (2002) 58–60 and Karanika (2014) 203–212.

[81] Konon *FGrH* 26 Frag. 1.19, with the discussion of Pache (2004) 68.

[82] Bowra (1936); Pomeroy (1978); Skinner (1982); Rauk (1989); Stehle (2001); and Levaniouk (2008).

[83] On the use of the epigrams as evidence, see, e.g., Skinner (1982) and Levaniouk (2008).

papyrus suggests a rather long composition of at least one hundred verses.[84] If we compare the laments discussed in the preceding sections, we can, in fact, make sense of some of these fragments.[85] Most obvious are the exclamations of grief (54: αἰαῖ like Demostratos' wife in *Lysistrata*), verbs of groaning and lament (18: στονα]χεῖσα γόημ[ι]) and loud crying (31: κατακλαίοισα and 48: κατακλα[). Lines 34–35, moreover, seem to confirm the evidence of later epigrams about Erinna, that she had been forbidden to mourn publicly: "Nor [am I able] to see you as a corpse (οὐδὲ σ' ἰδῆν . . . [νέ]κυν) nor break into lament (οὐδὲ γοᾶσαι) with uncovered hair.[86] Here, of course, we see once again the close coordination between the sight of the corpse and the start of the lament.

There are indications, moreover, that Erinna divided her poem into discrete sections that mimic the solo performances at family funerals. At three points in the poem, for example, we find summary justifications like those found at the end of the Homeric laments. Two of them, moreover, begin with the same inferential particle τῶ:[87]

> [τα]ῦτά τυ, Βαυκὶ τάλαι[να, βαρὺ στονα]χεῖσα γόημ[ι])
> (18: "That's why you, O wretched Baucis, I lament [deeply gro]aning!)
>
> τῶ τυ κατακλαίοισα τᾳ[ ]. . . λείπω
> (31: Therefore, mourning you loudly, I leave . . .")
>
> τῶ τυ, φίλα, φο̣[
> (47: "Therefore you, dear one. . . .")

If I am correct about the hexameter as a traditional medium for family laments, then one important motive for it use in Erinna's poem might have been to imitate and even to outdo the individual solos of Baucis' family, a performance from which she had been excluded. I am suggesting, in short, that as a kind of protest, she composed a private lament, which in better circumstances she should have been allowed to perform in public as one of a number of soloists. And in this lengthy dirge of her own it seems that she takes on all of the solo parts herself and marks the end of each with summary justifications:[88]

[84] West (1977) 112.
[85] Here and below I give the text of *Supplementum Hellenisticum* no. 401, with the supplements and translations of Levaniouk (2008).
[86] Skinner (1982) and Levaniouk (2008).
[87] Skinner (1982) 267–68.
[88] Following the text and commentary of Levaniouk (2008).

Section 1 (lines 1–8)	*Length*: at least 18 verses (beginning unpreserved) *Fragmentary content*: maidens, tortoise, moon, leaves, carding wool, deep wave, white horses, great courtyard *Summary justification* (18): "That's why you . . . I mourn."
Section 2 (lines 19–31)	*Length*: 13 verses *Fragmentary content*: dolls, bedchambers, maidens, wool workers, sprinkled salt, Mormo, bed *Summary justification* (31): Therefore, mourning you loudly, I leave. . . ."
Section 3 (lines 32–48)	*Length*: 17 verses *Fragmentary content*: not permitted to mourn publicly, house, shame, tears, nineteen, Erinna, distaff, grey hair *Summary justification* (48) "Therefore you . . . I mourn loudly!"
Section 4 (lines 48–53)	*Length*: at least 6 verses (ending broken off) *Fragmentary content*: fire, Hymenaios cries, "Alas, wretched Baucis!" *Summary justification*: (missing in the lacuna?)

This synopsis suggests that Erinna composed her lament as a series of solos, whose length varied between thirteen and eighteen verses, slightly longer than the "standard" laments in the *Iliad,* perhaps, which range between twelve and fourteen hexameters each. It is risky, of course, to generalize about the content of the individual sections, but their themes and content do seem to differ significantly from one another.

The first section, for example, includes the much-discussed tortoise game (lines 7, 9, and 17), apparently some kind of tag played in a courtyard by girls of marriageable age,[89] and, after the summary justification, Erinna shifts to an indoor scene, recalled from an even earlier stage of life, when she and Baucis played with dolls and sprinkled salt to keep away Mormo, a childhood boogeyman.[90] Section 3, however, moves to the present: Erinna is detained at her home, unable to see and mourn the body of Baucis amid references to shame and tears. That Erinna would use the format of a hexametrical lament to recall intimate moments with her friend makes sense, of course, in light of the

[89] Bowra (1936); Pomeroy (1978); and Arthur [Katz] (1980). Levaniouk (2008) 206–9 stresses Pollux' statement that this was a game for *parthenoi*, i.e., for unmarried girls of marriageable age; she suggests that the imagery of the game (tortoises and the jumping of white horses) seems to play with the transition from the natal home to married life.

[90] Levaniouk (2008) 210: "the mention of other games that are further back in a girl's life."

personal recollections that we saw in a number of the "standard" Homeric laments discussed earlier, for example, when Briseis recalls the private conversations that she once had with Patroclus or when Achilles remembers a time that Patroclus cooked up a quick dinner in their tent, when they were suddenly called to battle. We saw earlier that these vignettes were, in fact, the basis for the summary claim, which we find in the final verse, defending their right to lament the corpse in question; I suggest that they served the same function here in the *Distaff*, where this natural right was allegedly denied to the narrator/poet. Section 4 is also markedly different, because in it Erinna focuses on the wedding that Baucis never consummated. A funerary epigram (*AP* 7.712), composed either by Erinna herself or an imitator who knew the *Distaff* well, describes the contents of what was probably the final section of the poem:[91] Baucis' father-in-law burned her body on a pyre lit by her wedding torches and Hymenaeus changed his tuneful wedding song to the mournful sound of lamentation. This is, we should recall, precisely how Bion ends his *Epitaph for Adonis*. Erinna's *Distaff* is not, of course, a lament per se, but a by-now-familiar "mimetic" composition, like various poems of Theocritus, that represents, as well as performs, a private dirge for her dear friend. She does so, I suggest, by choosing the appropriate hexametrical meter for her composition, but also by creating individual sections marked linguistically by some of the hallmarks discussed throughout this chapter. The similarities between Greek *epithalamia* and laments and the strong possibility that the former were also performed in hexameters without music only strengthen the case.

How, then, do we explain the similarities between the *Distaff* and female lament in the *Iliad*? As in the case of the mimetic poems of Callimachus and Theocritus, we find two scholarly approaches. On the one hand, some have argued that Erinna used the Homeric laments as a model, either with ironic intent[92] or to give some kind of "epic" heft to her mourning.[93] But here again, aside from the use of the archaic particle τώ, the parallels with the Homeric laments are in the widely shared vocabulary of mourning, rather than in any direct quotation or allusion.[94] Others have claimed, however, that given the

[91] Skinner (1982) and Levaniouk (2008).

[92] Skinner (1982) 268, who sees "patent evidence" of direct imitation in Erinna's use twice of the archaic particle τῶ.

[93] Hunter (1996b) 16 sees Sappho and Homer as the important influences and suggests that Erinna chose hexameters to set her own emotional suffering "on par with the 'epic' suffering of men and hence must use the weight of hexameter to give vent to her grief."

[94] Skinner (1982) 268 n. 11, for example, can cite only two places where Erinna borrows from Homeric laments, and one of these is not even from the papyrus under discussion.

Doric dialect in which the poem is composed, it must have been modeled on lyric *thrênoi*, like those sung by Pindar or Stesichorus.[95] There are, however, also problems with this approach. First of all, Doric was Erinna's native dialect and it seems equally likely that she would perform hexameters in this dialect, especially if, as I suggested above, she was performing her version of a local lament that would have likewise been performed in the Doric dialect.[96] All of this, of course, raises this question: if we have evidence for archaic laments on nearby Lesbos, which were performed by women in a stichic meter without music in a local dialect, why should we look to the lyric poets of Boeotia or Sicily for Erinna's models? The reason is, of course, that such epichoric laments in Doric hexameters have not survived antiquity, but the lyric poems of Pindar and Stesichorus have.

Beginning with Theocritus, we find another set of mimetic laments composed in dactylic hexameters that support the independent existence of such a genre. We saw earlier how Theocritus in the *epithalamium* in *Idyll* 18 seems to imitate a traditional unison performance by women in stanzaic hexameters and how he also seems to have modeled the first third of his *Idyll* 2 on a traditional erotic curse composed in hexameters and divided by refrains. I suggest that he does the same in the embedded dirge "sung" by Thyrsis for Daphnis in the second half of Theocritus' first *Idyll* (lines 64–145), which is also divided by single-verse refrains that first invoke the Muses to begin a pastoral song and then ask them to stop singing.[97] Thyrsis, moreover, alludes to the traditional Adonis lament first by briefly assimilating Daphnis to Adonis (109–10: "Adonis, too, is in his bloom: he herds his sheep, kills hares, and hunts all manner of beasts") and then, toward the end of his performance, by reporting that "Aphrodite would have raised him (i.e. Daphnis) up again, but all the thread that the Fates assigned was run" (138–40).[98] Pseudo-Moschus' *Epitaphium for Bion*, a poem of 123 dactylic hexameters, is clearly modeled on Theocritus' first *Idyll*, especially the numerous refrains that call on the Muses to begin their song, and on Bion's *Lament for Adonis*.[99]

[95] See Gow (1952) 16 and Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 28–29, who quote Bowra (1953) 163 to the effect that Erinna's *Lament for Baucis* "is remarkable that it is written in hexameters. As such it differs from archaic *threnoi* . . . and resembles Hellenistic poems."

[96] West (1977) 117.

[97] For the formal similarities between Bion's *Epitaph* and Thyrsis' embedded lament in *Idyll* 1, see Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 65 and Estevez (1981) 37–41, who also stresses the similarities with the Adonis song in *Idyll* 15.

[98] Estevez (1981) 37 n. 12 sees a roughly similar "plot" in both poems: an introduction, a confrontation between Aphrodite and the dying young man, and the dying man's farewell.

[99] Manakidou (1996) 34–36 and Barbantini (2017) 360.

6.5 Summary

I have argued that Greek women performed laments in dactylic hexameters at family funerals and at the annual celebration of the Adonia, laments that consisted of solo performances punctuated by ritual cries or refrains, and that the poet of the *Iliad* is already playing with the generic expectations that his audience has about the traditional format of laments. We have seen that in the past some scholars suggested a tripartite analysis for these laments, an approach that they modeled on the structure of the Greek hymn, because they assumed wrongly that the Homeric lament was focused primarily on encomiastic praise. We saw, however, that this analysis does not, in the end, hold up, at least in the case of the Homeric laments, in which the initial superlatives are usually unconnected with the heroic virtues of bravery or strength, but rather are generated by the performance of small kindnesses, such as comforting a grieving young widow, protecting a mistreated sister-in-law, or preparing a quick meal before a battle. Past treatments of these laments have also tended to treat all performances as evidence for typical dirges, provided that the Homeric narrator labels them externally as a *goös* or notes the unison response at the end. I have argued for a narrower definition of a standard form based instead on internal markers within the speech itself: the superlative address to the corpse at the start and the summary justification at the end, which asserts the woman's claim to give a solo lament.

I suggest, moreover, that in the disorder of a real funeral—to judge by descriptions of modern Greek ones—these initial and closing verses were perhaps important signposts or cues in performance, by which a woman could, for example, signal her intent to begin a solo improvisation, by chanting the name of the dead man in the vocative and then giving some version of the superlative address in order to get the attention of the crowd. She would then improvise the rest of her lament, using stock ideas and phrases when needed. The summary justification at the very end of her solo, on the other hand, was presumably another important marker, because it let the crowd of fellow mourners know when it was time to respond with the antiphonal cry or groan and because it signaled to the next would-be soloist that it was time to make their own superlative claim and begin their own contribution.

I have also argued that the ritual laments for Adonis must have been known to the poet of the *Iliad*, who at critical moments assimilates both Briseis and Cassandra to Aphrodite. Our evidence for the hexametrical

form of these laments is, unfortunately, somewhat late, attested as it is in the mimetic poems of Theocritus and Bion. Sappho and Aristophanes suggest, however, that these laments were quite similar to those performed at funerals: a series of solos punctuated by unison refrains. And like the instructional oracles and the incantations these solos seem to have had a standard length. Those of Briseis, Hecuba, and Helen run between twelve and fourteen verses and when taken together amounted to group performance of at least forty lines. And we saw that the sections of Erinna's *Distaff* were comparable, although the overall length of her poem was probably around a hundred verses. The length of the Adonis laments are more difficult to assess. Bion's version totals ninety lines and the individual sections vary greatly from three to twenty-three lines.[100] The length of the funerary laments is comparable. The embedded lament for Daphnis in *Idyll* 1, for instance, runs to eighty-one verses, with sections of mainly two or four verses, and the *Lament for Bion* to 123. The performers are almost always women, who chant either in unison or solo, and their performances could often take a rare form of a protest in the patriarchal world that they lived in. It is only in the form of a lament, it seems, that Andromache at Hector's public funeral or the Athenian wife of Demaratus at the Adonia on the eve of the Sicilian expedition could criticize, explicitly or implicitly, the masculine desire for war and glory and remind them of the corpses of dead youths and of the widows and orphans. And in her *Distaff*, Erinna uses this same form to protest the injustice of being banned from the funeral of her closest friend, Baucis.

[100] Three verses (twice), eight verses (twice), and one example of each of the following lengths: ten, twelve, eighteen, and twenty-three verses.

7
Conclusions

Inquiry into our four major test cases—hymn, oracle, incantation, and lament—combined with earlier glances at other plausible hexametrical genres—such as oral epitaphs or *epithalamia*—has revealed that already in the archaic period poets were improvising short hexametrical compositions in a variety of ritual contexts, some performed as soloists, for example, oracles, epitaphs, or incantations, but others in unison, such as the *epithalamia* or the "begging songs." We also saw from the variant texts of oracles, "Orphic" tablets, and West Greek incantations that the composers and reperformers of these shorter ritual genres seem to improvise on these generic forms by using the techniques of oral composition, quite like the composers of Homeric and Hesiodic narratives. Those genres addressed to individuals, however, such as the oral epitaph or the solo lament, employed traditional forms, but were hand-tailored to the names of specific individuals and their situations. In the case of the unison performances we must, however, imagine that a single poet improvised a text that was later memorized and performed by the group, as was suggested in the account of the Samian begging song composed by "Homer" and then performed for years after by the children of the island, although here, too, variations in the texts of these begging songs suggests continual improvisation and recomposition as time wore on. We saw, too, a diversity of performers and performances; indeed, one welcome surprise in writing this book was the number of hexametrical genres that were regularly performed by women, as we saw in Circe's instructions and in the female dirges in the *Iliad*, where poets used the form and content of two traditional genres—oracle and lament—to frame and raise the profile of important kinds of female speech.

The primary goal of this volume was, then, to describe these overlooked genres and to trace their literary history from Homeric to Hellenistic times, but another aim was to show how poets used these generic forms throughout the centuries to deepen the impact of their narratives or explore mimetically the power of various kinds of ritual hexameters. We saw, for example, how Homeric narratives seem to embed such genres in various ways to advance

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their plots or deepen the presentations of their characters, most easily by introducing these short genres as character speech, as we saw in the case of the epitaphs, oracles, and laments, where little change was warranted beyond the names of the addressees and the details of their circumstances. Embedding or absorbing epichoric hymns into longer hexametrical poems was also relatively easy, because these poets were already using the same mixture of *mimesis* and *diagesis,* as well as the same meter as the hymns. In some cases, such as the "local" Delian or Eleusinian episodes in the Homeric hymns to Apollo and Demeter, this seems to have been a rather straightforward process of embedding a shorter, local hymn into a longer, Panhellenic narrative devoted to the same god. But in the case of the Chryses episode, we saw how the *Iliad* poet used the highly charged moral framework of an epichoric hymn to introduce quickly and effectively two of his most important characters, Agamemnon and Achilles. We saw a similar effect in how the solo laments in the second half of the poem allowed the poet to highlight important differences in the emotional or moral orientation of various female performers, for example, the anger of Andromache or the egoism of Helen.

I also suggested that the composers of Homeric epic could use these short hexametrical genres to widen the temporal horizons of their Panhellenic narratives. In his boastful and parodic "epitaph" for an unnamed Greek hero, for example, Hector unwittingly gestures toward his own immense grave mound that will be heaped up along the shore at the very end of the poem and to Achilles' monument, whose construction lies in the not too distant future. A similar effect is achieved by the doubled scenes of oracular performance in the *Odyssey*, at the end of which Proteus and Tiresias each give unprompted information beyond the temporal span of the poem at hand, by discussing the ultimately happy fates of Menelaus and Odysseus. The extended and repeated laments in the *Iliad* allow for a similar kind of time travel, both backwards, when the sight of Patroclus' body triggers in Briseis and the other Myrmidon slaves memories of the corpses of their own young husbands and brothers cut down in battle at the start of the Trojan campaign, and forward, when Andromache imagines the imminent death of her own son, an event that likewise occurs beyond the confines of the *Iliad*.

We also saw a few cases in which the Homeric poets seem to deploy local forms of these hexametrical genres, forms composed and performed along the Anatolian shore or the nearby islands. Every generation of scholars has acknowledged, of course, these areas as the initial audience for the Homeric poems, and our survey of the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer*,

suggested the same might also be true for short hexametrical genres, such as hymns, oracles, curses, and begging songs. In this light, Circe appears as a kind of local Anatolian "Sibyl" and Cassandra and Briseis, as local female worshippers wailing like Aphrodite over Adonis. But we saw local Anatolian influence most clearly in how the Homeric poet used, as a frame for *Iliad* 1, an epichoric hymn to Apollo Smintheus, some version of which was most probably performed at the god's sanctuary in the Troad.

This study also gave us a better appreciation of how later poets, especially Theocritus composed mimetic poems in hexameters that were often inspired by short hexametrical genres deeply grounded in ritual. I questioned, for example, the modern assumptions that in composing his short poems in dactylic hexameters Theocritus aimed at turning prose mimes or complicated lyric poems into hexameters. I argued, to the contrary, that in a number of cases, such as Simaetha's incantation or the Spartan *epithalamium* for Helen, these traditional genres were, in fact, originally composed in dactylic hexameters and that they provided the best models for Theocritus' mimetic poems, because they were presumably well known to his readers, who could thus appreciate more easily the artistry and sometimes the humor of the mimetic frame, in terms of both content and poetic medium. This is not to deny, of course, that these same mimetic *Idylls* are also replete with allusions to famous poems in other meters, but rather to suggest that these allusions were sometimes firmly embedded in the recognizable frame of a short hexametrical genre.

The temporal span of this study ends with the mimetic poems of the Hellenistic era, a choice encouraged by the abundance of evidence in that period, but also by my sense that these shorter hexametrical genres seem to lose their independence and importance in the periods that follow. We find, for example, that in the Roman period hexametrical binding curses and curative incantations seem to degenerate into prose formulae, sometimes without coherent syntax.[1] And the fate of hexametrical oracles is also well known, thanks, in part, to Plutarch, who in the second century CE wrote a famous essay on "Why the Delphic Oracle no longer speaks in verse," although we do see that the use of hexameters persists for at least another century in the oracular sanctuaries of Apollo at Claros and Didyma.[2] Other hexametrical oracles survive, moreover, into late antiquity, albeit only in a "textual" form,

[1] This is especially true of the "flee formulae" discussed in Appendix D; for their devolution into prose, see Faraone (2018a) 211–12

[2] Levin (1989)

brought together in famous collections, such as the "Chaldean Oracles" or the "Sibylline Oracles", that were consulted in Anatolia and farther East, and were often the focus of philosophical and theological interest.[3] The tradition of hexametrical *hypothêkai* continued in a similar fashion with the work of Pseudo-Phocylides, a poet who, sometime between 100 BCE and 100 CE composed 250 dactylic hexameters of advice that were heavily influenced by Jewish ideas and the text of the Septuagint.[4] Epichoric hymns in hexameters continued, however, to survive in the Greek-speaking world, as we can see in the papyrus hymn to Dionysus and in the epigraphic dossier, but especially in the late-Roman collection of the so-called Orphic Hymns, which seem to have been composed for a religious community in Anatolia.[5] These traditional hexametrical genres, in short, have a long and complicated history and their durability is undoubtedly linked to their original performance in ritual contexts where conservatism tends to reign, but also to the belief that, unlike many other genres, these hexameters were composed under some special kind of divine inspiration and therefore they should be carefully saved, transmitted, and interpreted.

[3] Belayche (2007).
[4] Van der Horst (1978).
[5] Graf (2009b).

APPENDIX A

Curse Prayers in Dactylic Hexameters

When Phoenix tries in *Iliad* 9 to persuade Achilles to rejoin the battle against the resurgent Trojans, he offers as a cautionary tale the story of Meleager, who dies after his mother, Althaea, curses him:[1]

ἥ ῥα θεοῖσι
πόλλ᾽ ἀχέουσ᾽ ἠρᾶτο κασιγνήτοιο φόνοιο,
πολλὰ δὲ καὶ γαῖαν πολυφόρβην χερσὶν ἀλοία
κικλήσκουσ᾽ Ἀΐδην καὶ ἐπαινὴν Περσεφόνειαν
πρόχνυ καθεζομένη, δεύοντο δὲ δάκρυσι κόλποι,
παιδὶ δόμεν θάνατον· τῆς δ᾽ ἠεροφοῖτις Ἐρινὺς
ἔκλυεν ἐξ Ἐρέβεσφιν ἀμείλιχον ἦτορ ἔχουσα.

She, then, to the gods, made a curse,
because she was greatly vexed over the killing of her brothers.
And many times she thrashed the plentiful earth itself with her hands,
calling on Hades and dread Persephone to give death to her son,
as she sat forward on her knees and her robe was drenched with tears.
And the mist-wandering Erinys, who has an implacable heart, heard her from Erebus.

In this scene Meleager's mother kneels on the earth and pounds it with her hands,[2] presumably to get the attention of those dwelling below—a graphic description of a cursing prayer (the verb is ἠρᾶτο), which invokes Hades and Persephone to destroy her son. In the event, however, she catches instead the attention of the Erinys (Fury), who is presumably the one who brought about the death of Meleager.[3]

We find a similar earth-pounding curse prayer in the Delphic section of the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*, where the goddess Hera asks the Titans for their help in creating the monster Typhon as a possible rival to Zeus's power (lines 332–42):

αὐτίκ᾽ ἔπειτ᾽ ἠρᾶτο βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη,
χειρὶ καταπρηνεῖ δ᾽ ἔλασε χθόνα καὶ φάτο μῦθον·
κέκλυτε νῦν μοι Γαῖα καὶ Οὐρανὸς εὐρὺς ὕπερθεν,
Τιτῆνές τε θεοὶ τοὶ ὑπὸ χθονὶ ναιετάοντες
Τάρταρον ἀμφὶ μέγαν, τῶν ἐξ ἄνδρες τε θεοί τε·

[1] *Iliad* 9.567–73. For an earlier and more detailed version of some of this material in this Appendix, see Faraone (2010).

[2] This repeated pounding gesture seems to be different from leaning upon the earth when uttering an oath, for which see Maslov (2015) 237–39.

[3] In the version of the story in Bacchylides 5, Athaea curses him in another manner, by burning a wooden log as an effigy of him.

αὐτοὶ νῦν μευ πάντες ἀκούσατε καὶ δότε παῖδα
νόσφι Διός, μηδέν τι βίην ἐπιδευέα κείνου·
ἀλλ' ὅ γε φέρτερος ἔστω ὅσον Κρόνου εὐρύοπα Ζεύς.
ὣς ἄρα φωνήσασ' ἴμασε χθόνα χειρὶ παχείῃ·
κινήθη δ' ἄρα Γαῖα φερέσβιος, ἡ δὲ ἰδοῦσα
τέρπετο ὃν κατὰ θυμόν, ὄἵετο γὰρ τελέεσθαι.

Then straightaway cow-eyed mistress Hera made a curse
and with her extended palm she struck the ground and spoke:
"Listen now to me, Earth and wide Sky above,
And you Titan gods, who dwell beneath the earth
around great Tartarus, and from whom men and gods (descend)!
You yourselves now listen to me, all of you, and grant (me) a child
apart from Zeus, who is in no way weaker than he (i.e., Zeus) in violence!
But let him be as superior in power, as wide-seeing Zeus was over Kronos!"
After speaking in this manner, she pounded the ground with her massive hand.
And then life-giving Earth moved, and when she (i.e., Hera) saw it
she rejoiced in her heart, for she knew her request would be fulfilled.

This curse prayer seems to be based on a cursing ritual similar to Althaea's, except that in this case Hera uses only one hand and the poet quotes the words in direct speech. Hera pounds the ground, as Althaea does, and essentially asks her ancestors for help: her grandparents (Gaia and Ouranos) and then the Titans, who include all her aunts and uncles and presumably her father, Kronos. The Titans are, of course, immortal and therefore are not "ghosts" per se, but, because they are permanently imprisoned in the underworld, they are indeed similar to human ghosts who are, in fact, often invoked in extant curses, especially if they are, like the Titans, unhappy.[4] I suggest, in short, that the poet of the *Hymn to Apollo*, deploying the rigorous form of anthropomorphism typical of the Greeks, imagines the goddess pounding the earth and invoking the ghosts of her ancestors. Hera's prayer is, moreover, correctly described a curse (332: ἠρᾶτο), because by praying for a son more powerful than Zeus, she is indeed praying for her husband's downfall, a goal that is especially clear from the way she frames her request to the Titans as an opportunity for them to redress Kronos' defeat at the hands of Zeus. The theme of vengeance, moreover, may explain the peculiarly pleonastic expression Τιτῆνές τε θεοὶ (335), translated as "Titan gods," because the later lexicographers tell us that the word τιτῆνες is an adjective meaning "avenging," in which case the phrase reads more easily as "avenging gods."[5] But as in the case of the Althea's curse, this scene ends with only one powerful divinity actually responding to the prayer: Earth was the first deity invoked in Hera's prayer and she alone responds and will presumably carry out the curse.

One could say, of course, that in both cases the poet simply transposes a prose curse prayer into verse, but once again there are hints that the poet of the *Iliad* knows of such curse prayers traditionally composed in dactylic hexameters. Line 570, for example, of Althaea's curse (κικλήσκουσ' Ἀΐδην καὶ ἐπαινὴν Περσεφόνειαν) is quite similar to the first line inscribed on a Hellenistic curse tablet from Tanagra:[6]

[4] The address to "Sky above" makes sense genealogically, since Sky is Hera's grandfather, but not cosmologically, since Sky must remain, as his epithet insists, above the earth, not beneath it.

[5] Hesychius s.v τιτῆνες as "avengers" (τιμωροί).

[6] *DT* 81.

Ἑ[ρμῆ]ν [κι]κλήσκω χθόνιον καὶ Περσεφόνηαν
δῆσαι Διονυσίας γλῶσσαν . . .

I call on Hermes the Chthonian and Persephone
to bind the tongue of Dionysias . . .

But this expression is not, in fact, close enough to be called a Homeric quotation or allusion. Another example is this third-century BCE curse prayer from Cyrene:[7]

δεῦρ[ο] Τύχαν καλέω· νῦν δὴ τύ<γα> τῆδε παρῆμεν
σύν τε Ζηνὶ, <Τύχα,> σὺν <καὶ> τε δυοῖσ<ι> Χάρισσιν.
Πραξιδίκα κώρα μεγαλήτο<ρος> Ἀγλαοκάρπου,
δῆσόν μοι Φερονίκας γλῶσ<σ>αν χῆρας τε πόδας τε.

I summon Tyche hither: Come here right now
with Zeus, you <Tyche>, and with the two Charites.
Praxidika, daughter of great-hearted Aglaokarpos,
bind for me the tongue, hands, and feet of Pheronika.

This poem first invokes a group of gods to be present (Tyche with Zeus and the two Charites), but it asks another deity, Praxidika, to do the actual binding. And since Aglaokarpos ("She of beautiful fruit") is elsewhere an epithet of Demeter, there is good reason to think, as the editor suggests, that the Praxidika invoked here is Persephone. The epithet Aglaokarpos, moreover, reminds us of Demeter's important role in agriculture and also recalls the peculiar verb used to describe the way that Althaea, as she curses Meleager, "thrashes" (ἀλοία) the ground with her hand, a verb commonly used in Greek to describe the threshing of grains by pounding them on a hard surface.[8] Since threshing was often carried out by Greek women, one wonders whether we see here a glimmer of a traditional hexametrical curse enacted either while the women threshed the grain or in imitation of it.

We find another hexametrical curse prayer inscribed at the start of a set of much later, Roman-period lead tablets found in Amathous on Cyprus that seem to be addressed to the ghosts of the people buried in the mass grave where the curses were found.[9] After an invocation of four fairly well-preserved hexameters, the text devolves into prose:[10]

δαίμονες οἱ κατὰ γῆν καὶ δαίμονες οἵτινές ἐστε
καὶ πατέρες πατέρων καὶ μητέρες ἀντιάνειροι
οἵτινες ἐνθάδε κεῖσθε καὶ οἵτινες ἐνθά{δε} κάθεστε
θυμὸν ἀπὸ κραδίης πολυκηδέα πρόσθε λαβόντες,

[7] SGD 150. For a full discussion of the text, see Pugliese Carratelli (1961–62) and (1963), Gallavotti (1963) 450–55 and Faraone (1995) 6–8 and (2004b). I print and translate Gallavotti's text.

[8] Pugliese Carratelli (1963) argues that Tycha and Praxidika are alternate names for Persephone and that Aglaokarpos is Demeter, pointing out that the worship of the Two Goddesses was especially important at Cyrene and that a chthonic deity such as Persephone would be the perfect recipient for a text buried in the earth.

[9] See Wilburn (2012) 169–218 for a detailed review of the archaeology; he ends up taking a position contrary to the one assumed above.

[10] *DT* 22; I give the composite and corrected text of Drew-Bear (1972) for the first four lines. When we have their opening lines, *DT* 23–37, all begin in the same fashion.

παραλάβετε τοῦ Ἀρίστωνος τὸν θυμὸν τ[ὸν]
πρὸς ἐμὲ ἔχει τὸν Σοτηριανὸν τὸν καὶ Λίμβαρον, καὶ τὴν [ὀργ]ὴν καὶ
ἀφέλεσθε αὐτοῦ τὴν δύναμιν καὶ τὴν ἀλκήν, [ποιήσ]ατε αὐτὸν ψυχρὸν καὶ
ἄφωνον καὶ ἀπνεύμονον {ψυχ[ρ]ὸν} εἰς ἐμὲ τὸν Σοτηριανὸν τὸν καὶ
Λίμβαρον.

Hexameters
Daimones under the earth, *daimones* whoever you are,
both fathers of fathers and mothers equal to their husbands,
whoever lie here and whoever sit here,
because you formerly took much-grievous anger (*thumos*) from your heart,

Prose
(i.e., now) take away from Ariston the anger (*thumos)*, which he has against me, Soterianos, also known as Limbaros, and his rage (*orgê*), and take away the power and might from him, and make him cold, speechless, breathless, toward me, Soterianos, also known as Limbaros.

These Cyprian curses are not entirely metrical: in general each begins with a version of the four verses quoted here, which become prose at the point where the victim's name is introduced.[11] The language of these first four lines is, moreover, clearly poetic at certain points, especially toward the ends of the individual verses, where one usually finds traditional epithets: the word ἀντιενίριοι at the end of line 2, for example, can be paralleled in a Homeric formula used to describe the Amazons, and the language of most of line 4 approximates hexametrical vocabulary and verse structure in creative ways without slavishly borrowing entire clauses or formulae.[12]

The fourth hexameter is quite puzzling, however, because it seems to refer to the situation of the ghosts themselves (i.e., "because you formerly took away *thumos* from your own heart"). In a Roman-era text one would expect *thumos* to refer to "anger,"[13] but such a translation does not suffice, since the tablets were found in a mass burial and it is unlikely that the ghosts of such people would be without anger—indeed, the traditional logic behind the placement of the curses suggests the opposite: that the ghosts of these "violently slain" people (males and females, apparently) would be restless and angry and therefore useful to the sorcerer.[14] It is, in fact, more likely that the metrical portion of the spell is older and originally focused on the archaic poetic meaning of *thumos* as a spirit or positive life force, as we see in Circe's advice to Odysseus and his crew (*Odyssey* 10.461): "But come eat food and drink wine, until you once again get spirit (*thumos*) in your breasts." The fourth verse of the Cyprian curse prayer, then, would seem to describe the opposite action: "[you], who beforehand removed a much suffering-spirit from your heart." A variant in two of the parallel Cyprian texts suggests, moreover, that the sorcerer's handbook might have included an alternate reading for the participle *labontes*. One (*DT* 32) adds *lipontes* after *labontes* as if a variant of it and another (*DT* 25) reads "having left behind (*lipontes*) your long suffering life (*bion*)." I suggest, therefore, that the original

[11] For example: the erroneous, unmetrical *-de* in line 3 appears in every copy of the formula found in the Cyprian cache.
[12] See Drew-Bear (1972) 88–92 for more detail.
[13] Faraone (2003).
[14] For a brief discussion and bibliography see Faraone (1991a) 22 n. 6.

hexametrical spell referred generically to the unhappy life and death of a violently killed person, and that over time, thanks to the evolving meaning of the word *thumos*, it came to refer to ghosts especially adept at taking away the anger of another person.[15]

One of the so-called hymns to Hecate in the Paris Magical Codex (*PGM* IV 2714–83) contains a long and mostly hexametrical text to be performed while burning incense. Its goal is the erotic conquest of a woman and it begins by invoking Hecate in the format of an Orphic hymn, with multiple epithets and short relative clauses, but then it suddenly addresses her ghostly companions, in ways that recall the curses from Amathous:[16]

> τὰν Ἑκάταν σε καλῶ σὺν ἀποφθιμένοισιν ἀώροις,
> κεῖ τινες ἡρώων ἔθανον ἀγύναιοί {τε} ἄπαιδες,
> ἄγρια συρίζοντες, ἐπὶ φρεσὶ θυμὸν ἔχοντες,[17]
> στάντες ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς ἀφέλεσθε τὸν ὕπνον,[18]
> μηδέποτε βλέφαρον βλεφάρῳ κολλητὸν ἐπέλθοι,
> τειρέσθω δ' ἐπ' ἐμαῖς φιλαγρύπνοισι μερίμναις.
>
> I call on you Hecate, with those who have died untimely,
> and if any(?) of the ghosts, who died without wives or children,
> hissing horribly having anger in their hearts,
> you (plur.) stand above her head and take away her sleep!
> And may her eyelid never be glued to eyelid,
> and let her be worn out by sleepless cares for me!

The transition to the ghosts is rough: unlike in the initial hymn to the goddess, which praises her universal and great powers, these ghosts are never praised, but rather they are described in unflattering ways as untimely dead, who are without wives and children and who are hissing with anger.

I have argued elsewhere, in fact, that these lines from the *PGM* hymn to Hecate were borrowed from a curse prayer that was quite similar to the Cypriot verses quoted earlier, especially if we understand that the awkward κεῖ τινες at the start of line 13 had originally been οἵτινες or something similar (12–15):

> <δαίμονες,> . . .
> [οἵ]τινες ἡρώων ἔθανον ἀγύναιοί {τε} ἄπαιδες,
> ἄγρια συρίζοντες, ἐπὶ φρεσὶ θυμὸν ἔχοντες,
> στάντες ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς ἀφέλεσθε τὸν ὕπνον,
>
> <*Daimones,*> . . .
> whosoever of the ghosts[19] died without wife and children,
> hissing horribly, holding anger in your heart,
> stand over her head and take a way her sleep!

[15] For a full analysis of this hymn, see Faraone (2010) and (2021a).

[16] I use the text and translation of Bortolani (2016) 309–312.

[17] At this point the papyrus indicates that another text has a different ending for this verse: ἀνέμων εἴδωλον ἔχοντες ("having the appearance of winds").

[18] This is a hypermetric verse, in part because of the insertion of the formulaic τῆς δεῖνα in it. The papyrus reads στάντες ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς τῆς δεῖνα ἀφέλεσθε αὐτῆς τὸν γλυκὺν ὕπνον.

[19] In later Greek, the word *hêrôes* often refers simply to the dead; see LSJ s.v.

Here, like the Cypriot curses, the ghosts are anonymous and receive no praise at all, but they are said to *hold* anger in their hearts, as we would expect. We should also note how the *PGM* hymn pairs plural adjectives in the same verse ("without wife and without children") that recall the paired plurals at the start of the Cypriot tablet: "fathers and mothers" and "those who lie here and those who sit here."

The hexametrical form of the invocation in the Amathous curses and of the address to the ghosts in the *PGM* hymn suggests that these verses are older than the lead tablet or papyrus on which they are preserved. Their content also suggests, albeit obliquely, that they are part of an tradition of curses addressed to the Titans, who appear in a similar role in a short invocation preserved among the so-called Orphic Hymns:[20]

> Τιτῆνες, Γαίης τε καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀγλαὰ τέκνα,
> ἡμετέρων πρόγονοι πατέρων, γαίης ὑπένερθεν
> οἴκοις Ταρταρίοισι μυχῶι χθονὸς ἐνναίοντες,
> ἀρχαὶ καὶ πηγαὶ πάντων θνητῶν πολυμόχθων, (4)
> εἰναλίων πτηνῶν τε καὶ οἳ χθόνα ναιετάουσιν·
> ἐξ ὑμέων γὰρ πᾶσα πέλει γενεὰ κατὰ κόσμον.
> ὑμᾶς κικλήσκω μῆνιν χαλεπὴν ἀποπέμπειν,
> εἴ τις ἀπὸ χθονίων προγόνων οἴκοις ἐπελάσθη. (8)
>
> Titans, famous children of Earth and Sky,
> ancestors of our fathers, beneath the ground
> inhabiting Tartarian houses in the inner chamber of the earth,
> the beginnings and the springs of all much-suffering mortals,
> and of sea-dwellers and winged ones, and those who inhabit the earth,
> because out of you every race comes throughout the universe.
> I call on you to send away grievous rage,
> if anyone (i.e., descended) from chthonian ancestors draws near our houses!

The date of any individual Orphic Hymn is, of course, difficult to pinpoint, but there is a general consensus that the collection transmitted to us from antiquity was assembled sometime in the third century CE, perhaps in western Anatolia and perhaps in the context of Bacchic groups.[21] Like the *defixio* from Amathous, this prayer seems designed to protect the speaker(s) from the anger of another person. There is, however, some confusion in the final verse about the precise identity of the individual who approaches the houses. Since the adjective χθόνιος regularly refers to infernal divinities and not the dead in Hades, it would appear that the attacker is one of the Titans themselves.[22] If this is so, then it is quite odd that the speaker of the hymn is not more explicit. The phrase τις ἀπὸ χθονίων προγόνων can, however, also be translated as "anyone (i.e., descended) from the chthonian ancestors," i.e., not the Titans themselves, but any of the humans who had

[20] *Orphic Hymn* 37. I give the text of Ricciardelli (2000) ad loc.

[21] See the summation in Graf (2009b) 169–71, who points out that the two most recent editors Ricciardelli (2000) and Morand (2001) are in general agreement with this idea.

[22] Morand (2001) 216–17.

descended from their family line since their imprisonment in Tartarus.[23] Since the Titans are the ancestors of all humans and gods, this attacker could be anyone, and since he has μῆνις, the usual designation for supernatural anger,[24] it is best to understand that he is either a god born from a later generation or more likely a dead human who has returned to haunt people in the form of a ghost.

There is a similar ambiguity regarding the identification of the "houses" in the last line of the hymn. Suggestions range from the "Tartarian houses" of the Titans previously described in line 3 to special initiatory buildings in Asia Minor, where an earlier generation of scholars imagined the hymns to be performed.[25] Given the vagueness of the Greek, none of these theories can be laid to rest, but it seems most likely that the οἶκοι here belong in one way or another to the people singing the hymn, who invoke their ancestors (the Titans) to send a supernatural antagonist away from their homes.[26] Indeed, in the penultimate line the speaker uses a verb sometimes found in amuletic texts: ἀποπέμπειν, "to send away."[27] Here the power of the Titans to send away the attacker presumably stems from their seniority in the underworld over all of their descendants. In the Cypriot curses the dead are described as "fathers of fathers" (πατέρες πατέρων), a phrase that we can compare to "ancestors of our fathers" (ἡμετέρων πρόγονοι πατέρων) in the Orphic text. And like the Titans, these δαίμονες are located beneath the earth and are asked as a collective to take away the anger (*thumos)* of a living man, just as the Titans are asked to send away the rage (*mênis*) of a dead one. Since the Cyprian curse tablets aim to silence and control the presumably hostile behavior of others toward the author or client, they also seem to be protective in nature.

There are, it seems, intriguing parallels between the curse prayers of Althaea and Hera and the bona fide hexametrical verses discussed above, which date to the Hellenistic or Roman period and invoke chthonic deities or angry ghosts to bind or otherwise curse the living. Althaea, for example, uses the verb κικλήσκω, which appears on the Hellenistic curse tablet from Tanagra and in the penultimate verse of the Orphic *Hymn to the Titans*, and Hera's curse actually invokes the Titans themselves as the archetypal "angry dead" who are locked up in Tartarus. It is unfortunate that we do not know the context of performance for the original oral versions of the Hellenistic- and Roman-period curses, because it would be interesting to know if they, too, were intoned while the curser was pounding the earth with the flat of the hand.

[23] See Ricciardelli (2000) 383. The usual interpretation is that the Titans are asked to send away the anger of one of their own, and indeed we find something like it in the Orphic Hymn to Korybas, who is himself bid (39.9) χαλεπὴν δ' ἀποπέμπεο μῆνιν. Here, however, the use of the middle imperative makes it clear that Korybas is asked to send away his own anger.

[24] See Section 3.2.

[25] For example, Athanassakis (1988) 53 translates "if some earthly ancestor of mine stormed your houses." See Ricciardelli (2000) 384 for a full discussion of earlier views.

[26] For the problems of hostile ghosts, see the late-classical instructions preserved in a Cyrenean inscription and other evidence discussed in Faraone (1992b) 81–84.

[27] Faraone (2004d).

APPENDIX B

Necromantic Prayers in Dactylic Hexameters

There is evidence that hexametrical invocations, similar to the curse prayers discussed above in Appendix A, were also used in necromantic ceremonies to encourage ghosts to arise, like Tiresias, and either answer questions or reveal the future. Although the necromantic scene in Aeschylus' *Persians* reveals the antiquity of these invocations and their content,[1] explicit evidence for their hexametrical form dates only to the Roman period. Thus, for example, Lucian seems to echo a hexametrical invocation of this type in his parodic description of the necromantic incantation (*epôidê*) of the Persian *magus* Mithrobarzanes (Luc. *Men*. 9):

> ὁ δὲ μάγος ἐν τοσούτῳ δᾷδα καιομένην ἔχων οὐκέτ᾽ ἠρεμαίᾳ τῇ φωνῇ, παμμέγεθες δέ, ὡς οἷός τε ἦν, ἀνακραγὼν δαίμονάς τε ὁμοῦ πάντας ἐπεβοᾶτο καὶ Ποινὰς καὶ Ἐρινύας καὶ νυχίαν Ἑκάτην καὶ ἐπαινὴν Περσεφόνειαν, παραμιγνὺς ἅμα βαρβαρικά τινα καὶ ἄσημα ὀνόματα καὶ πολυσύλλαβα.
>
> Meanwhile the magician held a burning torch and no longer muttered in a low tone, but shouted as loudly as he could, invoking the spirits, one and all, at the top of his lungs; also the Tormentors, the Furies, nocturnal Hecate and dread Persephone. With these names he intermingled a number of foreign-sounding, meaningless words of many syllables.

We should note that here the invocation shouted at night is designed, as was the hand pounding of Althaea and Hera, to get the attention of those below the earth. Wünsch pointed out, moreover, that the six words underscored above comprise a graceful hexameter,[2] which recalls three of the curse prayers discussed earlier in Appendix A:

Lucian's *magos*	καὶ νυχίαν Ἑκάτην καὶ ἐπαινὴν Περσεφόνηαν
Althaea	κικλήσκουσ᾽ Ἀΐδην καὶ ἐπαινὴν Περσεφόνειαν
Tanagran curse	Ἐ[ρμῆ]ν [κι]κλήσκω χθόνιον καὶ Περσεφόνηαν

These parallels make sense, of course, because those who perform curse prayers in hexameters could just as easily use these same invocations in necromantic prayers to make contact with the same inhabitants in Hades.

Lucian in his dialogue most likely imitates the Homeric scene, but the sequence of gods that Mithrobarzanes invokes is instructive, moving from well-known Greek deities to "foreign-sounding, meaningless words of many syllables," which probably refers to the nonsensical *nomina magica* and abracadabra that we find in Roman imperial curses

[1] See, e.g., Eitrem (1928) and Broadhead (1960) 302–9.
[2] Wünsch (1897) viii.

and amulets.[3] We see the same developments in the long papyrus fragment of the *Kestoi* of the late third-century CE polymath Julius Africanus, who quotes a variant text of the Homeric Nekyia that includes the necromantic invocations that are missing in our vulgate text of the *Odyssey*. Africanus' text has been dismissed by the few modern scholars who have discussed it, but the recent interest in the alternate proems to the *Iliad* and in the variants preserved in so-called "city texts" suggests that we might learn something about the generic expectations of the original audience and the later readers of the *Nekyia*. Ancient scholiasts had, in fact, long remarked on a peculiar absence of any invocation in the necromantic rituals performed in *Odyssey* 11, because, although Circe orders Odysseus in Book 10, as we saw in Section 4.2, to make a vow (presumably in a prayer) to Hades and Persephone to sacrifice animals upon his homecoming, he is entirely silent when he actually performs these rituals later in Book 11. The added hexameters, which Africanus claims to have seen in manuscripts in Jerusalem, Nysa, and Rome,[4] begins with thirteen lines that describe the rituals performed by Odysseus and they follow our extant manuscripts of the *Odyssey* fairly closely, with one important alteration at the end of the final sentence, which in the traditional text reads, "I myself drew my sharp sword . . . and did not allow the powerless heads of the dead to draw near the blood, *until I had enquired of Tiresias*."

In Africanus' version, however, the final "until" clause is replaced by another that introduces the missing speech-act: "and in response I uttered an *epos*."[5] The prayer runs as follows:[6]

> [ὦ ποτα]μοὶ καὶ γαῖα καὶ οἳ ὑπέρνερθε καμόντας
> [ἀνθρώ]πους τ[ί]νεσθον ὅσ{τ}ις κ'ἐπ[ί]ορκον ὀμόσσῃ,
> [ὑμεῖς] μάρτυροι ἔστε τελείετε δ'ἄμμιν ἀοι[δή]ν.
> [ἦλθον] χρησόμενος ὡς ἄν εἰς γαῖαν ἱκάνω
> [Τηλεμά]χου γ' ὃν ἔλειπον ἐπὶ κόλποισι τ[ιθή]νης,
> [τέκνο]ν ἐμόν. τοίη γὰρ ἀρίστη ἡ γ'ἐπαοιδ[ή].
>
> O rivers and earth and you, who below
> punish dead mortals, who swear false oaths,
> you yourselves be witnesses and bring our song to fulfillment.
> I have come to inquire how I might return to the land
> of Telemachus, at least, whom I left in the lap of his nurse,
> my child. For so excellent is this incantation![7]

These verses sound Homeric, in part because the first two and a half lines appear nearly verbatim at the start of the conditional curse that Agamemnon speaks during the oath

[3] Faraone (2018b) 179–82.

[4] "You will find the . . . whole *hypothesis* stored in the archives of the ancient fatherland, Colonia Aelia Capitolina of Palestine (i.e., Jerusalem), Nysa of Caria and . . . in Rome near the baths of Alexander." Thee (1984) 269–70 thinks that Africanus could have indeed found these extra verses in the archives that he mentions, but unfortunately the text at this point is preceded by a lacuna and obscured in other ways that encourage uncertainty.

[5] The text at this point inserts between the verses a parenthetical summation in prose that explains these initial thirteen verses: "he has described what he had to do" (ἃ δεῖ ποιῆσαι εἴρηκει).

[6] I use the text and translation of Wallraff et al. (2012) loc. cit.

[7] With the emendation of ἦν ἐπαοιδή to ἡ γ' ἐπαοιδή, as suggested by Wallraff et al. (2012) ad loc.

that the Trojans and Greeks take prior to the duel between Menelaus and Paris (*Iliad* 3.278–80). The mention of "mortals who swear false oaths" makes more sense there, of course, than here, but the invocation to the rivers makes equally good sense here, because Odysseus performs his necromancy at the confluence of two rivers.

Although these six verses are first marked internally in the third line as a "song" (ἀοι[δή]ν), the full phrase τελείετε δ'ἄμμιν ἀοι[δή]ν is, as we saw in Section 5.4, similar to the common coda to a number of the early hexametrical incantations and in the parody of Aristophanes: τελέει δ' ἀγαθὴν ἐπαοιδήν. And at the end of line 6 we find a similar focus on the quality of the charm: "For so excellent (ἀρίστη) is this incantation (ἐπαοιδ[ή])!" After these six lines, however, we find an interlinear and non-metrical summation: "he tells us what it was necessary to chant (ἃ δεῖ ἐπᾷσαι λέγει)." After this summary, however, the text preserves verses of an entirely different sort, much like those of Lucian's *magos*, which invoke Egyptian and Jewish gods, and *nomina magica* that are marked by a large number of metrical and other anomalies. Scholars have traditionally dismissed *all* of the added verses as late-Roman additions unworthy of serious discussion, but the two sets of invocations are clearly separated in the papyrus and are quite different.[8] The wildly syncretic content of the second passage is, of course, clearly a late-Roman concoction, but the first is a plausible invocation that might indeed have been composed by an oral poet or a rhapsode and thereby ended up in the manuscripts mentioned by Africanus.

There is, moreover, independent evidence that Odysseus' lost necromantic invocations were known in some form in the classical period. Aeschylus, in his lost play *Psychagogoi* ("Ghost-Raisers"), apparently dramatized Odysseus' necromantic endeavors to speak to Tiresias.[9] In one fragment, perhaps the first line of the play, the chorus chants in dactylic hexameters, "We, the folk who dwell around the lake, honor Hermes as our ancestor" (Frag. 273: Ἑρμᾶν μέν πρόγονον τίομεν γένος οἱ περὶ λίμναν), and it has been suggested that they were "devotees of Hermes . . . who operated a necromantic shrine."[10] Since, as has been mentioned before, dactylic hexameters are generally foreign to tragedy, it may well be that Aeschylus used the meter at the very start of his play to set the necromantic scene and that he could count on his audience's expectations of them. In a subsequent passage in lyric meter, the same chorus urge Odysseus to slit the necks of the sacrificial animals and "to call upon the age-old Earth and Hermes of the Underworld, escort of the departed, and to ask Chthonian Zeus to send up a swarm of souls."[11] These commands, presumably for rites to be performed offstage, suggest that Aeschylus, too, might have known a text of the *Odyssey* in which Odysseus addressed the chthonian gods and asked that they send up dead in such fashion.

At the very end of his *Frogs,* Aristophanes may also allude to these lines or more generally to necromantic invocations in dactylic hexameters, when the chorus of initiates chant six hexameters as they begin to lead Dionysus, Xanthias, and the victorious Euripides in

[8] Because of the absence of any later syncretic or magical elements in the first six verses, Wünsch (1909) 17–19 rightly considered them to be pre-Christian, but he did not venture to say how early they could be. There are two anomalies in these six verses: ἄν in the fourth line must be scanned long and in the next line the iota in ἐπί is long.

[9] Cousin (2005) and Sommerstein (2008) 268–72. The scene was set by a lake with a connection to the underworld (Frags. 273 and 273a), a lake that modern scholars identify variously as Lake Avernus in Campania, as the Acherusian lake in Thesprotia, or even as Lake Stymphalus in Arcadia.

[10] Sommerstein (2008) 268.

[11] Sommerstein (2008) 270–72 no. 273a.

a similar direction: out of Hades and back to the upper world. The first two are as follows (*Frogs* 1528–29):[12]

> πρῶτα μὲν εὐοδίαν ἀγαθὴν ἀπιόντι ποιητῇ
> εἰς φάος ὀρνυμένῳ δότε, δαίμονες οἱ κατὰ γαίας. . . .
>
> First grant to the departing poet a fine journey as he ascends to the sunlight, o you gods beneath the earth. . . .

This prayer makes sense, of course, in the context of the play, because Euripides had previously died, but now was being sent up again among the living, just as Tiresias was in *Odyssey* 11. The anonymous formulation δαίμονες οἱ κατὰ γαίας, moreover, recalls the phrase in the earlier section of Odysseus' prayers in the Africanus addendum: οἳ ὑπέρνερθε (also at the end of the line), but even more so the designation of the Titans discussed above in Appendix A (*HHAp*. 335: Τιτῆνές τε θεοὶ τοὶ ὑπὸ χθονὶ ναιετάοντες and *Orphic Hymn* 37.2: ἡμετέρων πρόγονοι πατέρων, γαίης ὑπένερθεν), and the hexameter that begins the invocation of the dead on the Cyprian curse tablets as the "*daimones* beneath the earth" (δαίμονες οἱ κατὰ γῆν).

[12] See Dover (1993) ad loc. Pretagostini (1982) 168 calls it a *propemptikon*.

APPENDIX C

Empedocles the *Goês*

According to the Hellenistic biographer Satyrus, Gorgias witnessed Empedocles performing "sorcery" (*goêteia*). As we saw earlier, in Section 5.2, it is impossible to know from this passage precisely what kind of sorcery Gorgias watched Empedocles perform.[1] The biographical tradition does, however, provide evidence for some of the procedures that Empedocles promises to teach Pausanias in Frag. 111, especially the control of the winds.[2] Satyrus, for example, cites the third-century BCE historian Timaeus, another Sicilian, for the anecdote that Empedocles himself was thought to have "prevented" dangerous winds from harming the crops:[3]

> For, when the Etesian Winds were once blowing violently enough to blight the crops, he commanded that asses be flayed and bags (*askoi*) be made (i.e., from the skins) and he distended them along the hills and ridges in order to capture the *pneuma* (i.e., of the winds). And after it ceased, he was called "He who prevents the winds."

The final two words in Satyrus' account κωλυσανέμαν κληθῆναι would have nicely filled the second half of a dactylic hexameter, a fact that suggests that Empedocles himself might have described the incident somewhere in his poetry.[4]

The process that Empedocles deploys to stop the winds is not at first clear.[5] Some modern commentators, relying on an older understanding of Empedocles as an early scientist, suggest a kind of massive engineering project, which involved stretching donkey skins as a barrier to prevent the winds from reaching the agricultural crops,[6] but this is

[1] This appendix is an abridged version of Faraone (2019d) 20–24.

[2] Translation by Jones (1918) loc. cit.; see the important discussion by Cook (1940) 103–4, to whom much of the next three paragraphs is indebted.

[3] Timaeus *FHG* 1.215–16 apud D.L. 8.60. Translation by Hicks (1925) loc. cit. Timaeus does not specify where this incident took place, but Clement (*Strom* 6.3, p. 445.11ff Stählin) places it at Empedocles' hometown, a good conjecture. On the dates of Empedocles, see Wright (1981) 1–5. Some scholars suggest that the biographers fabricated this incident from the boast in Frag. 101 (discussed above in Section 5.2) that Empedocles' student Pausanias will master the winds; see, e.g., Chitwood (2004) 42–46.

[4] It may also be significant that Nicomachus of Gerasa preserves an alternate version of the Empedocles' title: "He who *averts* the winds" (ἀλεξανέμας), which is metrically similar to κωλυσαν έμας and suggests that if Empedocles did describe this in a poem, at least two different versions survived in the oral or manuscript tradition; see Cook (1940) 105 n. 1 and van Groningen (1956) 48 n. 4.

[5] Fiedler (1931) 33–36.

[6] See, e.g., Wright (1981) 261: "(the wind) is checked by stretching asses' skins along hill (or cliff) tops." This is also an ancient understanding of the passage, as we can see, for example, in a passing comment of Plutarch's (*Moralia* 515c): "And Empedocles, the natural philosopher (φυσικὸς), by blocking up a certain mountain gorge, which permitted the south wind to blow a dire and pestilential draught down upon the plains, was thought to have shut plague out of his country." Timaeus, however, writing about a half a millennium earlier and presumably using Sicilian sources, says the wind, not plague, was causing damage to crops. Cook (1940) 105 n. 2 notes the tendency of Plutarch and other Second Sophistic authors "to minimize the marvelous" with respect to Empedocles.

not, in fact, what the passage says: the ass skins were fashioned into *askoi*, the kind of sacks that were commonly used as wineskins. And we are never told that these sacks were then stitched together as a continuous barrier or wall. Therefore, when Timaeus says that Empedocles "distended" the bags (the verb is *diateinein*) along the hills, he probably means that the bags were set up on hills in such a way that the wind filled them up with air, somewhat like the windsocks used at modern airports to test wind direction. Such wineskins would not, of course, physically prevent the winds from reaching the crops of Akragas. It seems, in fact, that Empedocles was credited with a kind of metonymic ritual that was also known to the poet of the *Odyssey*, who tells us of a mortal man named Aeolus, who also had power over the winds (10.19–22):[7]

> δῶκε δέ μ᾽ ἐκδείρας ἀσκὸν βοὸς ἐννεώροιο
> ἔνθα δὲ βυκτάων ἀνέμων κατέδησε κέλευθα·
> κεῖνον γὰρ ταμίην ἀνέμων ποίησε Κρονίων.
> ἠμὲν παυέμεναι ἠδ᾽ ὀρνύμεν, ὅν κ᾽ ἐθέλῃσι.
>
> He (i.e., Aeolus) gave me an *askos* made of the hide of a nine-year-old bull
> and in it he bound the paths of the blustery winds,
> for the son of Kronos had made him a keeper of the winds,
> both stopping and rousing, whichever one he wished.

Empedocles, I suggest, might have had this passage in mind when he boasted to Pausanias (see Section 5.2), "You will stop (παύσεις) the power of the weariless winds . . . and again, if you want (ἢν ἐθέλῃσθα), you will lead the winds back." In the *Odyssey*, Aeolus binds Euros (East Wind), Notos (South Wind), and Boreas (North Wind), in order to allow Zephyros (West Wind) alone to carry Odysseus' ship homeward in the correct direction. And like Empedocles, Aeolus creates his *askos* out a special leather (the skin of a nine-year-old ox) and he, too, is given an important title: ταμίης ἀνέμων ("Keeper of the winds"). At an earlier point in the wanderings, Athena, because she wished to move Odysseus' ship in a different direction, bound (the verb is again κατέδησε) many other winds and commanded them to stop (παύσασθαι), but exempted Boreas.[8] These Homeric passages suggest, then, two possibilities for restraining contrary breezes, in order to help people traveling on ships:[9] (i) a mortal could acquire special knowledge about trapping a wind metonymically within an *askos* made of the skin of a special animal; or (ii) he could pray to a divinity like Athena, who could perform the same benefit without an *askos*.

According to much later sources, Greek farmers, worried like Empedocles about their crops, also bound destructive winds in effigy in a consecrated sack of the same type (*askos tetelesmenos*) that was made in this case from the skin of a dolphin.[10] Here the use of

[7] The meaning of the adjective ἐννεώροιο is unclear, but "nine-year old" is the customary translation. The adjective βυκτάων means "swelling," is connected with the blasts of a trumpet, and may imply violence, e.g., "hurricane winds."

[8] *Od.* 5.382–87: "But Athene. . . bound down the paths of the other winds (τῶν ἄλλων ἀνέμων κατέδησε κελεύθους) and commanded them all to stop and be lulled to rest (παύσασθαι δ᾽ ἐκέλευσε καὶ εὐνηθῆναι ἅπαντας); but she roused the swift North Wind, and broke the waves before him, to the end that Zeus-born Odysseus might come among the Phaiacians, lovers of the oar, escaping from death and doom."

[9] See Strömberg (1950) 82–84, for a full discussion.

[10] Eustathius 1646.8–11, quoted by Cook (1940) 107 along with Eust. 1645.59–60 and the scholiast ad *Od*. 10.2, who seems to refer to written recipes.

a special skin—like Empedocles' ass skins—that had been "consecrated" points again to some kind ritual action aimed at metonymically restraining the wind and thereby preventing it from damaging the crops. None of these ancient sources explicitly mentions, however, the mortal use of incantation or prayer along with these wineskins, but it is extremely likely that, in addition to his metonymic action, Aeolus also employed some kind of speech-act directed against the winds, and indeed we do hear elsewhere of prayers or incantations used to protect against similar dangers. Aristophanes, for example, refers to a special prayer that Samothracian initiates knew, by which they "turned aside" dangerous storms at sea,[11] and Pausanias (2.34.3) mentions persons at Methana, who try to avert hailstones from crops with sacrifices and incantations (*epôidai*). We also find brief notices in the lexicographers to clans or hereditary priesthoods at Athens, Eleusis, and Corinth, whose names Heudanemoi ("Those who lull the wind") and Anemokoitai ("Wind-lullers," lit. "Those who put the wind to sleep") suggest that they, too, pacified the winds by some kind of soothing chant. In light of these titles, we can better understand the monikers mentioned earlier: "Keeper of the winds" given by Zeus to Aeolus and "He who prevents the winds" given to Empedocles, presumably by the people of Akragas. Finally, it is not difficult to connect the Corinthian "Wind-lullers" with the secret rituals performed in Pausanias' time at the Altar of the Winds, on which "the priest sacrifices to the winds one night in every year . . . [and] performs other secret rites (*aporrhêta*) at four pits, soothing the fury of the blasts; and he chants, they say, Medea's spells (*epôidai*)."[12] Here the four pits were probably oriented to the four points of the compass and allowed for individualized treatment of the winds, as we saw in Aeolus' control of the four winds in the *Odyssey*, restraining some, so others could blow more freely. The multiplicity of the Corinthian pits may also explain why Empedocles used more than one *askos* and set them up at different locations. No source tells us what metrical form the Corinthian *epôidai* took, but as we have learned in Chapter 5 they are almost always hexametrical.

[11] Aristophanes *Peace* 276–79, with the discussion of Faraone (2004d).
[12] Paus. 2.12.1. Strömberg (1950) passim.

APPENDIX D

Early Anthologies of Hexametrical Incantations

Most scholars are in agreement, voiced or tacit, that the lead tablet upon which the Getty Hexameters are inscribed was used as an amulet[1] and not without good reasons: these verses begin with a reference to hiding the text "in a house of stone," and they twice quote versions of the famous *Ephesia grammata*, a protective incantation said, for example, to have protected Croesus from the flames of his funeral pyre or an unnamed boxer from defeat at the Olympic games.[2] The tablet was found folded six times, a feature that is also common to amulets. There are, however, some oddities about the Getty tablet that do not fit the model of a composite amulet, oddities that raise the possibility that it is actually or originally an anthology of sorts that preserves a series of independent incantations as prompts for oral performance or scribal copying. It is laid out, for instance, in two side-by-side columns, a rare occurrence on amulets, and there are other indications of the kind of scribal habits that one finds in handbooks. Marks to the left of the first column, for example, seem to indicate a section break, as do the indentation and vertical margin line at the bottom of the second.[3] The text itself, moreover, is long and has multiple parts, whereas the other early lead amulets from Locri, Himera, and Selinus have, as far as we can tell, only one short text: the *Ephesia grammata*.[4]

Most puzzling, perhaps, are the repeated verses addressed to Paieôn that (as was discussed earlier at the start of Section 5.2) divide up the long poem into four clearly defined sections, all but the penultimate one in dactylic hexameters:

1. *Ephesia grammata* in hexametrical verses (8–20)
2. An Apolline command-oracle (24–31)
3. *Ephesia grammata* in prose (33–41)
4. The first line only of a charm that begins with the "neither X nor Y shall harm" formula (48) discussed in Section 5.3

[1] See, e.g., the essays edited by Faraone and Obbink (2013).

[2] This charm originated as a fairly long hexametrical charm that was at least thirteen verses long in the Getty Hexameters and nine verses long on the Phalasarna tablet. It quickly devolved, however, into the corrupted prose version that we also find in the Getty Hexameters. Finally, in the Roman period it turns entirely into the popular nonsense formula *aski kataski*. See Bernabé (2013) for the best and most succinct discussion of its changing form and history.

[3] Two short parallel horizontal lines appear to separate lines 7 and 8 of the first column and thus seem to mark the beginning of the first quotation of the *Ephesia grammata*. At the bottom left of the second column, the scribe began to write the second version of the *Ephesia grammata*, but then apparently decided that it should be indented, perhaps following his exemplar. He then apparently drew a vertical guideline to remind himself where the indented margin was.

[4] A much longer and detailed version of this appendix appeared as Faraone (2013b).

Now it is true that we sometimes find inscribed on the gold and silver amulets of the Roman period composite amuletic texts of differing content,[5] but the inclusion here of two different versions of the same incantation, one metrical and the other prose, suggests something different: that the text on this lead tablet was not, in fact, designed to be an amulet, but rather an anthology, in which the repeated verses about Paieôn operate as markers that separate one incantation from the next. In an anthology, of course, it is entirely plausible that we might find two versions of the same spell, a phenomenon that we see, for example, a second–or third-century CE copper amulet from Acre (near Syracuse) that seems to be a single-sheet formulary that contains three *phylaktêria* of Moses (*GMA* 32), each introduced by rubrics.[6]

In fact, two other anthologies of hexametrical charms survive from the Hellenistic period. The first is a papyrus fragment of Augustan age, the so-called Philinna Papyrus (lines 6–20):[7]

. . . . ἐπαοιδή πρὸ]ς κεφαλῆς [πόνον]
]ς
c]ὺ γὰρ εἶ θνη[τοῖς]
]ἐφ ὅλοις π[. . .]ων
τ[έλεcον τε]λέαν ἐπαοιδ[ή]ν.

[7–8]ας Σύρας <Γ>αδαρηνῆς [ἐπαοιδή] πρὸς πᾶν κατάκαυμα

[<σεμνοτάτης δὲ> θεᾶς παῖς μ]υστοδόκος κατεκα[ύθη],
ἀκρ]οτάτῳ δ' ἐν ὄρει κατεκαύθη· <πῦρ δ' ἐλάφυξεν>
ἑπτὰ λύκων κρήνας, ἑπτ' ἄρκτων, ἑπτὰ λεόντων·
ἑπτὰ δὲ παρθενικαὶ κυανώπιδες ἤρυσαν ὕδωρ
κάλπισι κυανέαις καὶ ἐκόμισαν ἀκάματον πῦρ.

Φιλίννης Θε[σσ]αλῆς ἐπαοιδή π[ρὸς] κεφαλῆς π[ό]νον.

φεῦγ' ὀδύν[η] κεφαλῆς φεύγει δὲ [λέων] ὑπὸ πέτ[ρα]ν·
φεύγουσιν δὲ [λύ]κοι, φεύγ[ουσι] δὲ μώνυχες [ἵπ]ποι
[ἱέμενοι] πληγαῖς ὑπ' [ἐμῆς τελέας ἐπαοιδῆς]

The [incantation of] for head[ache]

. . . for you are [the one who] . . . for mortals . . . in all . . . p[erféct] a perfect incantation.

[5] See, e.g. *GMA* 52, a long silver amulet from Beirut, which combines one after the other six different kinds of protective texts, e.g. exorcism, direct prayer ('protect!'), invocation formula (*epikaloumai*), second exorcism, flee-formulae (addressed to diseases) and Christian acclamations.

[6] They are (i) "a phylactery which Moses used to protect himself" (the name *Sabaôth* on a gold tablet); (ii) "a phylactery of Moses, when he went up Mt. Sinai" (a prayer to Jahweh followed by the text of Deut. 32.1–3); and (iii) "a phylactery of Moses, when he went up Mt. Sinai" (beginning of the same prayer to Jahweh, followed by claims for the efficacy of the amulet). See Faraone (forthcoming 2021b).

[7] *PGM* XX. I give the text as it appears on p. 265 of the second volume of *PGM*. Maas (1942) 33–38 reconstructed the text by joining P.Berol.7504 and P.Amherst ii, Col.II(A) with the help of a fragmentary fourth-century CE version of a very similar text, *SM* 88. For this translation and a discussion of its anthology format, see Faraone (2001b).

The [incantation] of [ ]a, the Syrian woman from Gadara for every inflammation:

> [The son of the <most august> goddess,] the initiate was scorched. On the highest mountain he was scorched. <The fire gulped down> seven springs of wolves, seven of bears, seven of lions, but seven maidens with dark-blue eyes drew water with jugs of lapis lazuli and quieted the untiring fire.

The incantation of Philinna from Thessaly for headache:

> Flee headache! [Lion] flees under a rock! Wolves flee and single-hooved horses flee propelled by the blows of my perfect charm!

As we can see, this text takes the standard form of a poetic anthology, just like the *Palatine Anthology*. Each entry is introduced by a prose rubric in ecthesis and expressed in a formulaic way: author's name in the genitive + ἐπαοιδή + the purpose of the spell introduced by the preposition πρὸς. We should also note the consistency of the incantations themselves: all three charms are probably hexametrical, between three and five verses long, and their rubrics suggest that they were all curative.

The three incantations themselves, moreover, were probably composed originally as oral performances. The fragmentary first charm, for example, probably preserves (as the editor's reconstruction indicates) the popular coda "bring to perfection this perfect incantation," which, as we saw in Section 5.5, Aristophanes parodied as a spoken charm at the end of the fifth century.[8] And the rather beautiful couplet ("but seven maidens") at the end of the ἐπαοιδή of the "Syrian woman from Gadara" has been justly admired for its poetic artistry and may indeed date to the archaic period.[9] And finally, the flee formula[10] in the third incantation shows up on the Hellenistic lead tablet from Phalasarna (see below), and Pliny, in his description of a ritual procedure designed to cure eczema, makes clear that it was still being performed orally in his own day:[11]

> On ordinary stones near rivers grows a dry, hoary moss. One of them (i.e., the stones) is rubbed with another one smeared with human spittle. With the latter stone the eczema is touched and the one who touches says: "Flee, cantharides! A savage wolf pursues you!"

[8] See Section 5.4 and Appendix B.

[9] Although Maas (1942) thought the final two hexameters had an "archaic ring" to them, scholars usually suspect that these verses are a Hellenistic composition of Egyptian origin, perhaps influenced by Isiac liturgy, but as I have pointed out in Faraone (1995), the mythological setting of the burning *mystodokos* goes back to very old Mesopotamian models and argues that we should leave open the possibility that Maas was correct about the archaic date of the last two verses.

[10] For the hexametrical flee formulae, see Furley (1993) 93–95; Kotansky (1991) 113–14; and Faraone (2004b). Zellmann-Rohrer (2016) 10–12 discusses the postclassical tradition.

[11] Heim no. 68 = *HN* 27.100. The analogy here between cantharid beetles and eczema seems to lie in the fact that immature dung beetles first appear as small white dots similar in appearance to the eruptions of eczema.

The incantation itself, although written in Latin characters in our manuscripts, is in fact a single Greek hexameter: φύγετε κανθαρίδες· λύκος ἄγριος ὕμμε διώκει.[12] And we have additional evidence that similar charms were being performed in the third century BCE, when Leonidas of Tarentum begins a humorous epigram by addressing mice with a hexameter verse that is clearly drawn from this tradition: "Flee, nocturnal mice, out from under my cabin!"[13]

The second Hellenistic example of an anthology is the lead tablet from Phalasarna, which dates to the third century BCE and contains a number of short and unrelated hexametrical charms or prayers inscribed one after the other.[14] The text seems to be divided up into different sections, but these sections are not in any way marked on the lead tablet—for example, by rubrics, ruled lines, or indentation:[15]

Section 1. "I command you (κελεύω) to flee from these houses of ours. . . ." (lines A–B)

Section 2. "I call on (καλέω) Zeus, the averter of ills, Herakles, the sacker of cities, Iatros, Nike, Apollon." (lines C–D)

Section 3. Flee formula (lines F–H)

. . . φεῦ[γ,'] ἅμα φεῦγε, λύκαινα,
φεῦγε, κύων ἅμα σύ, καὶ ΠΡΟΚΡΟΠΡΟΣΑΤΕ σύνοικος.
μαινόμενοι δ<ρ>άντων πρὸς δώματα αὐτοῦ ἕκαστος

". . . flee, flee at once, she-wolf!
And you, dog, flee at once and PROKROPROSATE, . . . associate.
Let them run maddened, each to his own house"

Section 4. Version of the *Ephesia grammata* (lines I–P).

Section 5. "Whosoever hurts me and those who KOLLOBALOUSI evils—hawk's feather, PELEIOPETON, white-horned(?) AMISANTON of a she-goat, claw of a lion, tongue of a bearded lion-serpent(?)—shall not harm me with ointment or application or with drink or with spell, spoiler of all things." (lines Q–V)

The text begins (Section 1) with a two-verse formula that commands some illnesses or demons to flee. Since Apolline commands of this type are known from inscribed gems and other amulets of the Roman period, these two verses could stand as a complete hexametrical charm, although we should note that the command formula itself seems to go back to the tradition of Apolline oracles (discussed earlier in Chapter 4).[16]

[12] The penultimate word appears in Pliny's MSS as *hema*, which some editors transliterate as Greek *haima* ("blood"), but I use the revised text of Edmonds (1959) 542–44 no. 38a, who rightly sees that *hema* hides ὕμμε, a poetic version of the second-person pronoun that appears in many of the other examples.

[13] *Anth. Pal.* 6.302. But I have argued elsewhere that the Greeks were using such hexametrical formulae much earlier; see Faraone (2018b) 208–213.

[14] Jordan and Kotansky (2011) 54. The Phalasarna tablet is also folded six times horizontally; see the drawing in Jordan (1992) and Faraone (2018b) Figure 8.3.

[15] See Jordan (1992) for the Greek text and this translation (with some additions) and Faraone (2018b) 203–6.

[16] Note that here, as in the oracular texts quoted there, the verb of command appears at the end of the line.

This initial couplet is followed in Section 2 by a cletic invocation ("I call on . . .") to Zeus, Herakles, Iatros, Nike, and Apollo and, although the verse that follows (E) seems to be half gibberish, it probably once expressed the goal of the preceding invocation: e.g., "to protect . . ."). The text changes, then, from prayer to incantation in the three-line "flee formula," which is similar in content and verbal expression to the headache charm quoted above from the Philinna Papyrus, a charm that is also only three verses long.[17] After another single line of incoherent verse (I), we find the longest charm on the amulet (Section 4): a corrupted version of the *Ephesia grammata* that, as we saw above, appeared twice in the Getty Hexameters. The tablet closes with Section 5, where the first and final two verses (lines Q and S–T) resemble, as we saw earlier in Chapter 5, various lead amulets from West Greece, as well as the boast of the disguised Demeter in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, where she claims that she is expert in protective magic.[18] The long intervening line (R) is unmetrical and is perhaps a list of *materia magica*, an appropriate addition to a handbook. The composite text of the Phalasarna tablet suggests, then, that a series of five originally disconnected incantations, mostly of short length, were at some point gathered together, without any rubrics or formal divisions. Indeed, if we remove from the Getty Hexameters all of the interstitial verses dealing with Paieôn, they, too, would appear to be a similar kind of patchwork quilt, with two sections quoting different versions of the *Ephesia grammata*, a third using an oracular command formula and the last quoting a short boast about future freedom from harm.

[17] These "flee formulae" seem to have originated as hexametrical chants performed during scapegoat rituals, for which see Faraone (2004b) and (2018b) 208–13.

[18] See Section 5.4 of this volume.

APPENDIX E

Instructional Oracles as a Frame for the Hesiodic Calendars

Commentators have suggested in passing that parts of the agricultural and nautical calendars in the *Works and Days* (383–694) appear to be oracular in language or style, but they have showed little interest in explaining why this is so, beyond the broad idea that oracles and the Hesiodic calendars both show signs of epic technique or oral composition.[1] As it turns out, these calendars reveal a regular pattern of oracular instructions, like those discussed in Chapter 4, that are in this case keyed to astronomical or other natural signs telling us when a certain action, e.g., sowing or reaping, should be performed.[2] Our failure to appreciate this oracular frame is tied, I suggest, to an engrained habit of thinking that ancient Greek oracles were mainly concerned with predicting the future, when in fact, as we have seen earlier in Sections 4.1–2, they were often concerned with giving advice and triggered by a specific event or "sign." By way of example, we begin with this entry in the farmer's calendar, which tells us what to do at the start of the rainy season (*Works and Days* 448–54):

> φράζεσθαι δ᾽ εὖτ᾽ ἂν γεράνου φωνὴν ἐπακούσεις
> ὑψόθεν ἐκ νεφέων ἐνιαύσια κεκληγυίης,
> ἥ τ᾽ ἀρότοιό τε σῆμα φέρει καὶ χείματος ὥρην
> δεικνύει ὀμβρηροῦ· κραδίην δ᾽ ἔδακ᾽ ἀνδρὸς ἀβούτεω·
> δὴ τότε χορτάζειν ἕλικας βόας ἔνδον ἐόντας.
>
> Mark well, whenever you hear the voice of the crane,
> calling each year from above, out of the clouds,
> which bears the sign (*sêma*) for plowing and reveals the season
> of stormy weather and gnaws at the heart of the man with no oxen.
> Then, indeed, feed your oxen indoors.

First of all, commentators have pointed out how the verse-initial use of the verb φράζεσθαι recalls a number of hexametrical oracles,[3] for example, one allegedly composed by Bakis for the Euboeans prior to the Persian invasion of Greece:[4]

> φράζεο, βαρβαρόφωνος ὅταν ζυγὸν εἰς ἅλαβάλλῃ
> βύβλινον, Εὐβοίης ἀπέχειν πολυμηκάδας αἶγας.

[1] See, e.g., West (1978a) ad locc.; Fernández Delgado (1986) 87–88 talks about oral composition. I am grateful to Radcliffe Edmonds for some crucial advice on how to structure the argument that follows.

[2] This argument appears in the first half of Faraone (forthcoming 2021c). The translations from the *Works and Days* generally follow the translation of Most (2006).

[3] West (1978) ad loc.: "a frequent *incipit* in oracles"; Edmonds (2011a) 255–56: "a feature . . . characteristic of verse oracles."

[4] Herodotus 8.20.22.

> Mark well, whenever a barbarian-speaking man on the waves casts a yoke
> of papyrus, to banish from Euboea the much-bleating goats.

And indeed, Aristophanes confirms that this was a traditional feature of oracles, when he twice places the same imperative at the start of his oracular parodies in the *Knights*,[5]

> φράζευ, Ἐρεχθεΐδη, λογίων ὁδόν, ἥν σοι Ἀπόλλων
> ἴαχεν ἐξ ἀδύτοιο διὰ τριπόδων ἐριτίμων.
> σῴζεσθαί σ᾽ ἐκέλευ᾽ ἱερὸν κύνα καρχαρόδοντα.
>
> Mark well, son of Erechtheus, the path of the prophecies, which Apollo
> shrieked to you from his inner sanctum through the priceless tripods.
> He commands you to keep safe the holy saw-toothed watchdog.

Here, moreover, the rhetoric is even more emphatic, because the oracular advice is said to be "commanded" by Apollo, using the verb *keleuein*, which is, as we have seen, another feature of instructional oracles.[6]

In the Hesiodic passage quoted above, scholars have also noted the oracular cliché that is also common in oracles: "whenever (εὖτ᾽ ἄν) you hear the voice of the crane, . . . then, indeed (δὴ τότε), feed your oxen indoors." And this same formula occurs again at the start of another section of the Hesiodic calendar (571–81):

> ἀλλ᾽ ὁπότ᾽ ἄν φερέοικος ἀπὸ χθονὸς ἄμ φυτὰ βαίνῃ
> Πληιάδας φεύγων, τότε δὴ σκάφος οὐκέτι οἰνέων,
> ἀλλ᾽ ἅρπας τε χαρασσέμεναι καὶ δμῶας ἐγείρειν.
> φεύγειν δὲ σκιεροὺς θώκους καὶ ἐπ᾽ ἠῶ κοῖτον
> ὥρῃ ἐν ἀμήτου, ὅτε τ᾽ ἠέλιος χρόα κάρφει·
>
> But whenever the house-carrier climbs up from the ground on the plants,
> fleeing the Pleiades, then there is no longer digging for vines,
> but sharpen your scythes, rouse your slaves,
> and avoid shadowy seats and sleeping until dawn,
> in the harvest season, when the sun withers the skin!

Here, once again, West noted that ἀλλ᾽ ὁπότ᾽ ἄν is a "frequent *incipit* of oracles" and he further suggested that the "riddling kenning" in the first verse—"house-carrier" (φερέοικος) for "snail"— sustains the "oracular tone."[7]

Commentators have, in short, noted oracular language or formulae in a few places in the Hesiodic calendar, but they have not appreciated how these oracular elements cluster at the start of each new season and thereby provide a framework for the entire calendar with a consistent focus on the precise timing of the agricultural work.[8] Indeed, in the series of thirteen paraphrases below, we can see how the calendar is regularly

[5] *Knights* 1015–20 and 1030–36; the parallels with Hesiod are pointed out by West (1978a) ad loc. For more examples of φράζευ, all in the initial position of the first line of the oracle, see P&W nos. 112.1, 225.1, 374.1, and 408.1.

[6] For parallels see Sections 4.2 above.

[7] West (1978a) ad loc.

[8] Mazon (1928) 71 and Lardinois (1998) 324–25.

punctuated by similar oracular statements, which are expressed in three different temporal constructions: genitive absolutes, ἦμος followed by τῆμος, or εὖτ' ἄν δὴ followed by τότε δὴ:

383–84: "Whenever the Pleiades rise (genitive absolute), begin (ἄρχεσθ') the harvest (i.e., late October or early November)." (Astronomical sign)

414–22: "Whenever (ἦμος) the strength of the fierce sun abates . . . and Zeus sends the autumn rain . . . , then (τῆμος) wood cut by iron is least bitten by worms . . . , then (τῆμος) . . . cut wood (ὑλοτομεῖν)." (Weather signs)

448–54: (quoted and discussed above): "Mark well (φράζεσθαι), whenever (εὖτ' ἄν) you hear the voice of the crane (i.e., late October or early November) . . . , then, indeed (δὴ τότε), feed (χορτάζειν) your oxen indoors." (Animal sign)

458–61: "Whenever (εὖτ' ἄν) the plowing season appears first to mortals, then, indeed (τότε δὴ), set out (ἐφορμηθῆναι), both your slaves and yourself, to do it (i.e. plow)." (Weather sign)

486–90: "Whenever (ἦμος) the cuckoo in the leaves of the oak calls for the first time, then (τῆμος), . . ." (Animal sign)[9]

504–37: "The month of Lenaion, evil days, ox-flayers all of them . . . then also (καὶ τότε) put on a defense (ἔσσασθαι ἔρυμα) for your skin, as I bid you (ὥς σε κελεύω): a soft cloak and a tunic that reaches your feet." (Weather sign?)[10]

564–70: "Whenever (εὖτ' ἄν) Zeus has completed sixty wintry days after the solstice, then, indeed (δή ῥα τότε), the star Arcturus is first seen rising (i.e., the second half of February). . . . After this . . . the dawn-lamenting swallow rises into the light and spring begins anew . . . prune (περιταμνέμεν) your vines." (Astronomical and animal signs)

571–81: (quoted and discussed above): "But whenever (ἀλλ' ὁπότ' ἄν) the house-carrier (i.e., the snail) climbs up from the ground on the plants, fleeing the Pleaides (i.e., mid-May), then, indeed (τότε δὴ), there is no longer any digging of the vines, but sharpen (χαρασσέμεναι) your scythes and rouse (ἐγείρειν) your slaves (i.e., for the harvest)." (Animal and astronomical signs)

582–96: "When (582: ἦμος) the golden artichoke flowers and the cicada . . . pours out its clear-sounding song (i.e., mid-July) . . . , then (585: τῆμος) goats are fattest and

[9] There are no instructions at this point, but rather a brief gnomic sentence (paraphrase): "if it rains for three days, then late plowing contends with early."

[10] This section only barely fits the oracular pattern and might have been imported, as West (1978a) suggests ad loc., from some other source, perhaps an Ionian one. He points out, for instance, that the passage begins not with a sign but by naming a month, Lenaion, the only time that Hesiod names a month in this poem, and in this case giving an Ionic rather than a Boeotian name. Then there follows a long poetic description (505–35) that begins with an elaborate description of the winds (505–11), which might have originally stood in some epic simile—again West (1978a) ad loc.—and includes descriptions of shivering animals (512–18 and 529–35) and an old man, a young woman, and an octopus (518–29). Only at lines 536–37 do we get any commands, which do seem to be general and oracular in style, e.g., "as I command you!" (536). One explanation for the anomaly would be that the idiosyncratic verse 505–35 somehow replaced the original astronomical or weather sign.

wine is best . . . Then, indeed (589: ἀλλὰ τότ' ἤδη), let there be (589: εἴη) shade, wine, cheese etc." (Plant and animal signs)

597–99: (in reversed order): "Urge (ἐποτρύνειν) your slaves to winnow Demeter's grain, whenever (εὖτ' ἄν) the strength of Orion first appears (i.e., June 20th)." (Astronomical signs)

600–608: "And whenever (αὐτὰρ ἐπήν) you have laid up all the means of life inside your house, (then) I command you (κέλομαι) to make your hired man leave the house and to look for a childless serving-girl (i.e., to hire)." (No external sign)

609–14: "And whenever (αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν) Orion and Sirius come into the middle of the sky and rosy-fingered dawn sees Arcturus (i.e., mid-September), then (τότε), Perses, . . . cut off (ἀπόδρεπε) all the grape-clusters, show (δεῖξαι) them to the sun . . . , cover (συσκιάσαι) them up . . . , and into jugs draw out (ἀφύσσαι) the gifts of much-cheering Dionysus." (Astronomical signs)

615–17: "And whenever, indeed, (αὐτὰρ ἐπήν δὴ) the Pleiades, the Hyades, and the strength of Orion set (i.e., October), then next (τότ' ἐπειτ') be (εἶναι) mindful of the plowing season." (Astronomical signs)

Here, in addition to the repeated conditional frames, we find another important oracular feature, one that we saw earlier: the use of such phrases "as I command you" (536: ὥς σε κελεύω) and "I command" (603: κέλομαι). We should also note that the last seven of these oracular instructions are packed rather closely together into fifty-three verses and that five of the seven are triggered by astronomical signs. The first six, on the other hand, include only one astronomical sign and are spread out over more than thrice the number of lines (180). This configuration may suggest, therefore, that last fifty-three verses reflect more closely an even earlier version of the calendar, one that was oriented entirely around the rising and setting of constellations.

The so-called seafaring section of the calendar (618–94) follows the farmer's section, and seems to be a discrete unit, although some have suggested that it was originally part of the farmer's calendar:[11]

619–23: "Whenever (εὖτ' ἄν) the Pleaides flee the mighty strength of Orion and fall into the sea (i.e., November), then, indeed (δὴ τότε), gusts of all kinds of winds rage. Then (τότε) no longer keep (ἔχειν) your boat on the wine-dark sea, but work (ἐργάζεσθαι) the soil, mindful, as I command (ὥς σε κελεύω). . . ." (Astronomical and weather signs)

646–49: "Whenever (εὖτ' ἄν) you turn your foolish heart and decide to flee your debts and hapless hunger, (i.e., then) I will show you the measure of the much-resounding sea, I who have expertise neither in seafaring nor in boats." (No external sign).

665–77: "Whenever (genitive absolute) the summer, the toilsome season, comes to an end, sailing is timely for mortals . . . , then (τῆμος) breezes are easy to judge and the sea is without trouble. Then (τότε) with confidence entrust (πιθήσας) your swift ship to the winds, drag (ἕλκέμεν) it to the sea, load (τίθεσθαι) it

[11] See, e.g., the chart in West (1978a) 253, who would insert the spring sailing before the May harvest and the summer sailing before the September vintage.

with all your cargo, but hasten (σπεύδειν) to return home again, and don't wait (μένειν) for the new wine, the autumn rain, and the terrible blasts of Notus." (Weather signs)

679–81: "Whenever (ἦμος) the leaves on the top of the fig tree first appear to a man as large as a crow's footprint (i.e., end of April), then (τότε) the sea is passable." (Plant sign)

This section has a frequency of oracular instructions similar to that of the second half of the farmer's calendar (four in sixty-two verses), but it includes only a single astronomical sign at lines 619–23, where we also find the oracular expression "as I command" (623: ὥς σε κελεύω), a phrase that we saw twice in the agricultural calendar. We should also note that the use of the sequence ἦμος—τῆμος/τότε in the last entry to introduce a plant sign (the size of fig leaves) picks up a pattern of non-astronomical signs that we saw earlier in the farmer's calendar: autumn rain (414–20: ἦμος—τῆμος); the cuckoo in the oak tree (486–90: ἦμος—τῆμος); and the artichoke and the cicada (582–96: ἦμος—τῆμος). This pattern bolsters the consensus that the agricultural and navigational sections were probably composed as a single calendar, but it also suggests that this original calendar might have itself originally combined calendars of two different kinds: (i) an astronomical one keyed to the rising and setting of the stars and introduced by the repeated condition ὁπότ' ἄν/εὖτ' ἄν—τότε δὴ; and (ii) with another one triggered by weather, animal, or plant signs and organized by a differently formulated condition: ἦμος—τῆμος. One might, of course, suggest that the poet varied the form of these initial conditions simply to avoid monotony, but the repeated—and to the modern ear monotonous—use of the introductory formula ἢ οἵη ("or like her, who") at the start of each section of the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* suggests that such consistency of expression was welcome or at least tolerable in archaic hexametrical poems, especially in a catalogue or a calendar.

The fact that oracular language and syntax occurs densely throughout the calendar and hardly anywhere else in the *Works and Days* suggests, then, that it came from a different source, one that perhaps even claimed oracular inspiration from Apollo or some other god. And even within the calendar we saw at least two different types of instructional oracles in play. First there were those using ὁπότ' ἄν . . . τότε δή and triggered by astronomical signs, a feature that may suggest origins in the Near East or at least in a more universal or Panhellenic composition. And then there were those oracles using the ἦμος . . . τῆμος condition and triggered by animal, plant, or weather signs, a calendar that was perhaps of a more local or even Boeotian origin keyed as it is to presumably local flora, fauna, and climate. And even after being embedded in the Hesiodic poem, the calendar underwent two more significant changes that we might perhaps connect with the Hesiodic persona of the poem: (i) some poet separated the seafaring parts and placed them after the agricultural almanac, in order to set up the autobiographical boasts that follow; and (ii) some poet (not necessarily the same poet) added gnomic statements at various points within the calendars that tell us precisely *how* the farmer or sailor should proceed, once he had identified the change in season, and often *why* he should do so.[12]

[12] These additions, often in the form of a *hypothêkê*, are treated in the second half of Faraone (forthcoming 2021c)

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